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THE  
ABIDING COMFORTER

A NECESSITY

TO

JOYFUL PIETY AND EMINENT USEFULNESS.

BY

REV. ANTHONY ATWOOD,  
OF THE PHILADELPHIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

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"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter,  
that he may abide with you for ever."

"I will not leave you comfortless."

"For the joy of the Lord is your strength."

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TO THE MEMORY  
OF  
MY SAINTED FATHER AND MOTHER,

WHO, WITH OTHERS,  
BY THEIR HAPPY LIVES, JOYFUL WORSHIP, SWEET SONGS  
OF PRAISE AND GODLY EXAMPLE,

LED MY YOUTHFUL HEART TO HUNGER

FOR  
A CERTAIN, JOYOUS AND SATISFACTORY PIETY,

AND TO ALL WHO EITHER ENJOY OR THIRST FOR  
THE INDWELLING,

*ABIDING COMFORTER*

TO MAKE THEM JOYFUL IN THE HOUSE OF THEIR PILGRIMAGE,

These Pages are Humbly and Respectfully Dedicated

BY  
THE AUTHOR.



## P R E F A C E.

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WITH Lord Bacon experience was the test of every system—indeed, of all truth. Although so much is said of science and philosophy in these days, it is surprising how little men really know. How do you know that what you teach is true? is a sensible question to propound to any teacher, either in science or religion. A scientist finds a single fact, and then builds a huge pile of theories, wood, hay and stubble, upon it, and demands the assent of all men to his foolish deductions. We yield to his facts, but laugh at his theories.

We cleave to the theory of Lord Bacon: experience tests all opinions, and detects their truth or fallacy. In this work I have purposely dwelt at greater length on experience than on doctrinal teaching. “He that doeth his will (has experience) shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God,” and he only in a proper sense. For more than a century the Methodists have been undivided, or, in other words,

a perfect unit both in doctrinal views and in Christian experience. It is only recently, mostly since the close of the war, that any difference of opinion has appeared, the Church having grown to such vast proportions and increasing so rapidly in wealth as to turn her away more or less from her old doctrines and simple forms of worship.

The watchful fathers, trained on huge circuits, have passed away, and men of better education, but less practical experience, now rule for the hour. Every one seems to believe, preach and write as he deems best, without fear of reproof or censure. So it was not in former years. Even our standard doctrines have become subjects of doubt and disputation. Mr. Wesley and the fathers of our Church prohibited this.

In the early part of 1874, Rev. J. T. Crane, D.D., of the Newark, New Jersey, Conference, published a book, entitled "Holiness the Birthright of God's Children," in which he labors to prove that the moment a man is converted "from the error of his ways" to God, he is perfectly pure. There are no remains of impurity left, no anger, lust, hatred, emulation or strife, but he is at that moment entirely sanctified.

That publication was the occasion of my writing

this. But it is not the author's aim to reply to Dr. Crane's arguments; he refers to them as a means rather than as an end. The grand old Wesleyan and Bible doctrine of holiness, the corner-stone, foundation, and indeed the superstructure, of our great missionary Church, cannot be eliminated from her system without compassing her own ruin at the same time.

I have rather intended to build up our people in their most holy faith, to show them as briefly as possible in the space at disposal the great privilege it is theirs to enjoy, to lead them into the higher life of perfect love, the experience of a full rest in Christ as a perfect Saviour from all sin.

The reader may discover an occasional repetition of thought. This results from the fact that a part of the work was written as a serial in the "Home Journal," without any thought at first of putting the articles in book form. And when they were thus put together, the author did not deem it worth while to go through the labor necessary for a full correction. The reader will therefore please excuse any inelegancies of this sort.

The author feared that some truly changed and justified persons, on reading Dr. Crane's book, might be filled with doubt of their acceptance, be-

cause their experience did not measure up to his ideas. He desired also to defend the fathers, as he deemed them misrepresented as to their experience of perfect love. Hence his list of a few of them whose testimony is most valuable to the Church.

Above all, he wished to show that Jesus Christ had furnished to the world a model of his own Church, converted first and sanctified wholly afterward by the gift of the Holy Ghost. The recent outpouring of the Spirit, bringing up the experience of the Church to the divine standard of the New Testament, is shown by its grand results to be of God.

Having done what he could to counteract evil tendencies, to lead the Church to hold fast to her long-tried doctrine and rich experience, and to avoid all novelties, he commits the whole to the blessing of God and the judgment of those who hunger for the divine fullness.

THE AUTHOR.

PHILADELPHIA.

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# THE ABIDING COMFORTER.

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## CHAPTER I.

### *CHRIST'S OWN MODEL FOR HIS CHURCH.*

“Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.”

OUR Saviour Christ is the model for his followers in all time. What he taught we must teach, what he did we must do, as far as the mere human can copy the divine. His plan for planting, building up and establishing his Church on earth is clear and well defined, and should be followed with care in every age. He introduced that system of ministry which goes out to seek the lost. Prior to that time the people were required to come to the places designated to worship, bring their offerings and seek the divine favor; he sent the gospel out to seek them.

### THE SPIRITUAL STATE OF THE DISCIPLES.

For this purpose he chose, called, regenerated and ordained the twelve apostles. Their sound moral and religious character is indicated in the fact that He in whom was inherent all wisdom and knowledge

selected them for a special work : " I have chosen you out of the world ; thine they were, and thou gavest them me." Their spiritual condition is clearly indicated in this single quotation. " Thine they were, and thou gavest them me," would of itself seem to settle the question.

They could not have been unregenerate " children of wrath even as others," or they would not have been chosen by him or given to him by the Father. Nor would they have been willing instantly to have forsaken their only means of subsistence at the call of one of whom they had so little knowledge. They were doubtless among that pious class who, like Zacharias and Elizabeth, were " waiting for the consolation of Israel." In conversation with Christ they allude to the sacrifices they had made : " Lord, we have forsaken all and followed thee ; what shall we have therefore ?" He answered, " Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me in the *regeneration*, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." The pious Quesnel on this passage says, " The philosophers forsake all without following Christ ; most Christians follow Christ without forsaking all : to do both is apostolic perfection."

#### THEIR FIRST COMMISSION.

The apostles were sent out to preach that the " kingdom of heaven is at hand, to heal the sick,

cleanse the lepers, and cast out devils." They were wisely restricted to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel, to the Jews alone." They knew the Jewish Scriptures and the hope and expectation of that people as to a coming Messiah. They could not have spoken of what they had no knowledge. And those to whom they were sent knew only what Moses and the prophets had spoken; these could well understand, therefore, all that the apostles could say. To the Greeks their ministry would have been foolishness, as was that of St. Paul to Festus, who knew nothing of the books read by the Jews, while Agrippa was convinced because he was trained in the religion of the Jews.

These were devout, good men. The Saviour never sent unregenerate men to preach and work miracles. The supposition is monstrous. He who thinks he did should never find fault with any Church, in subsequent ages, for sending out men of no piety, mere men of the world, entirely godless men, to preach the gospel, as they would be following the very highest example. "An evil tree cannot bring forth good fruit." These men did return with joy, declaring "that even the devils were subject unto us through thy name." He then cautions them against rejoicing in their success, and says, "Rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven." This certainly asserts their spiritual relation to Christ and fitness for heaven. And this, taken in connection with a passage in Hebrews, "To the general assembly

and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven," together with one in Revelation, "whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,"—this, it seems to me, settles the question as to the moral and spiritual state of the disciples of our Lord while Christ was yet with them.

#### A SPIRITUAL CHANGE

was well understood among the Jews in the time of our Lord's earthly ministry. A few Scriptures will convince us of this. When the Saviour found that Nicodemus was totally in the dark on this spiritual change, he expressed surprise that a teacher of his years should not understand so plain a matter: "Art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not these things?" He said to the sick of the palsy, "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee." "Forgive and ye shall be forgiven." "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." "Wherefore I say unto you, her sins which are many are all forgiven, for she loved much." Christ examined Peter after his fall: "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these;" the reply was emphatic: "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." This settled the question as to his restoration to divine favor and acceptance.

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world can-

not receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him : *but ye know him*, for he dwelleth *with you*, and shall be in you." They had the Spirit with them continually, as justified believers, prior to the crucifixion. The Saviour said of Nathanael, "Behold an Israelite indeed in whom is no guile." He pronounced him so perfect as to be without guile—all that has ever been required of a converted saved soul. We must not suppose that because the Jewish rulers were wicked politicians, there was no faith or deep spiritual piety and life among the common people. It was doubtless from among these pious praying ones that Christ selected the twelve apostles.

If any one still doubts and desires further evidence, let him read the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth chapters of John : "Let not your heart be troubled ; ye believe in God, believe also in me ;" "In my Father's house are many mansions ;" "I go to prepare a place for you ;" "I will come again and receive you unto myself ;" "Peace I leave with you ;" "Now are ye clean through the word which I have spoken unto you ;" "I am the vine, ye are the branches ;" "Abide in me ;" "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own, but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."

Of course all the good done in us, from the first drawings of the Father in childhood to the full measure of grace imparted in perfecting Christian character in the baptism of the Holy Ghost, is by the

Spirit of God. Through and by the same Spirit all the pious have been drawn, trained, awakened and born again, as well as sanctified wholly. It is the same Spirit that enlightened and inspired the ancient prophets, and that the Saviour said "was with and in" his disciples while he was yet with them; but notwithstanding all this, it is said: "The Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified."

I have been thus explicit because it has been said that the first spiritual change of the disciples of our Lord occurred on the day of Pentecost when the Spirit fell upon them. I have heard this preached occasionally as the only real conversion of the apostles. It may do for men of little reflection or thought, but will not do for a sound divine or an intelligent hearer.

#### THOUGH BORN AGAIN, NOT PERFECT.

They indicate that the remains of carnal nature were still with them as in other justified believers: "Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest. And Jesus perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child and set him by him, . . . and said, He that is least among you all, the same shall be great." They were like good men in more modern times—selfish and ambitious of distinction. Each desired to be greater than the other. It was because of the feebleness of their faith that Jesus answered and said: "O faithless and perverse

generation ! how long shall I be with you and suffer you ?”

James and John, two of the most calm and least excitable of them all, when provoked at the Samaritans, said : “ Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, even as Elias did ?” But he turned and rebuked them, saying : “ Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of, for the Son of man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them.”

Christ frequently spoke of the immaturity of the graces of his disciples : “ I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot hear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth.” Can there be a more clear and beautiful expression of what the baptism of the Holy Ghost would do for them ? How clear is the word of God, when read with a single purpose of knowing what is truth, and not to sustain a previously-formed opinion ! Their work had been confined to their brethren, the Jews. But after Christ should leave them their field of labor was to be enlarged, and they were to go into all the world, among all people, which would most fearfully test their faith, and battle with their prejudices, requiring more power than they then had.

“ And being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly bap-

tized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." "But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." It was a specific command that they should not depart on their mission until they received an endowment not yet received. Regenerate as they were, they were not yet fitted for their life-work until baptized with the Holy Ghost. To all intents, and without any room for cavil, they were required to wait for a second blessing, a grace in advance of their pardon and regeneration and the experience they then had, to fully fit them for the service he had assigned them.

THEY WERE ALL FILLED WITH THE HOLY GHOST.

What was this? What did it do for those on whom it fell? Mr. Wesley, in his conversation with Count Zinzendorf, deemed it the sanctification of the one hundred and twenty. Both believed they were pardoned and regenerated before. If it was their first spiritual change, how can we understand what is said before as to their relation to Christ, fitness for heaven, "names written" there and "chosen out of the world"? They were not allowed to commence their life-work until thus baptized of the Spirit. They were different men ever afterward. Not fit for his witnesses before—able and efficient witnesses ever after. Such they and their successors were to be "unto the uttermost parts of the earth;" which shows that the same "gift of



power" was to continue in the Church till the end of time. They were like soldiers half armed, not fit for battle before, ready for any contest afterward. Weak and timid up to that time, though good men, men of giant power, subsequently. Was that power to be confined to that day and these believers only, or was it to be continued in the Church? We deem it Christ's model of his Church for all time, and so preach the gift of the Spirit as a necessity to the Church.

IT WAS A CLEANSING POWER.

1. All petulance of spirit was taken away in a moment of time. James and John no more felt like calling for fire from heaven to consume wicked men. On the contrary, they rejoiced that "they were counted worthy to suffer for his name sake." There were mockers among the multitude who said they were filled with new wine. "But love is not easily provoked." Hatred, malice and all ill-tempers were purged away. Ambition, to which they had been so prone, the sin that so constantly had beset them, was felt no more, so far as the history informs us. It was not repressed, but utterly rooted out. We hear no more the inquiry which should be the greatest, but all were willingly on an equality. Each preferred the other to himself. How beautifully is this seen in the selection of the seven deacons to care for the poor! The Grecians had complained of their widows being neglected in the daily ministrations, and the

whole Church elected a board of seven stewards, five of whom were Greeks, and but two Hebrews. Their names indicate this. The greatest number elected were on the side of the complaining party. We hear no more fault found.

As well did all selfish love of wealth cease and pass away for ever. Without compulsion, and for the benefit of all, their goods and lands were sold and the proceeds thrown into a common fund. This state of things, of course, could only last for a short time, and ought not to have continued; but it is adduced here to show that the love of Christ did cure most perfectly the love of wealth. And perfect love, the power of the Holy Ghost on the heart, always has, and always will, cure inordinate love of the world, "For whoso loveth the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

2. They were not only emptied, but filled. Cleansing is good, but filling with all the fullness of God is far better. Their after history shows that they were full of divine sympathies to which they had before been strangers. St. Paul "longed for the Philippians in the bowels (or sympathies) of Jesus Christ." So did all upon whom the Spirit fell, for all people without respect to nation or locality. Philip, a layman, fled from Jerusalem to Samaria because of persecution, and he forgot his former prejudices as a Jew and preached Christ as a common Saviour of all men, and soon had the people rejoicing in a common salvation.

3. Fear of men gave place to love. The leading apostle had been afraid of a servant-maid, and deserted his Master at a critical moment in the fearful tragedy of his sufferings. He is quite another man now, after the baptism of "power and love, and of a sound mind." Only a short time subsequently he faces the Jewish council, and charges them with both the betrayal and murder of his Lord and Master. He and all the others had an endowment of courage as well as of love to which they had been entire strangers. This fullness was the finishing of their preparation for the work to which Christ had ordained and sent them. Without it they could not have succeeded in their ministry, either in Judea or elsewhere.

We claim this to be the type, the Saviour's own model, of the Christian Church in all the world and for all time. Men are first regenerated by the Spirit, adopted into the divine family, their names are written in heaven, and they have victory over sin. But they are far from being pure in heart or wholly sanctified. Were such to be called away from this life, God would see to it that their faith should claim Christ as a full Saviour as this world, with all its claims and cares which have hindered the full exercise of faith before, recedes from sight and they near the world of spirits. Full sanctification even then is not by death, but by faith in Christ's sacrifice for sin, which they failed to exercise before because of the power of things seen. "Without holiness no man

shall see the Lord" must remain for ever true, and faith alone, as the means of purification, remains also a truth to the last. Precisely the same infirmities and remains of carnal nature still exist in imperfect Christians which we have seen did exist in the twelve apostles while Christ yet remained with them—ambition, desire of distinction among their fellows, feeble faith and the spirit evinced by James and John against the infidel Samaritans, which the Saviour so tenderly reproved.

But the baptism of the Holy Ghost cured all this in their case—has in all ages since, and will to the end of the world. He was the Sanctifier and Comforter then, is now, and ever will be in all the world. There is no longer any necessity of outward signs, no tongues of fire or sound of rushing wind, to convince either the learned or ignorant. The Spirit always bears its own testimony, and that is sufficient to convince.

“ Though on our heads no tongues of fire  
Their wondrous powers impart,  
Grant, Saviour, what we more desire—  
Thy Spirit in our heart.”

Pardon or justification is a great grace, as it gives peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and a title to the life to come. The experience, however, of most laymen, as well as ministers, has convinced them that a divine fullness, a higher spiritual life, is needed for such as desire to win

others and lead them to the Fountain of living waters. The grace that saves from sin is one thing, but the grace that fully sanctifies, and empowers for service, and fills with ecstatic joy and praise, is a much higher grace, as was witnessed on the day of Pentecost, and has since been seen in the lives and labors of all great reformers as well as all men of much influence. I need not recite the facts in proof: they are patent to all reading and observing men.

THAT IS THE MODEL CHRIST HAS GIVEN.

Why follow the first Church in all things else, and neglect to copy its spirit and fullness of power from on high? Is the gift of power less needed now than at a former period? Have education and a higher civilization rendered it less necessary to the Church or the reformation of the world now than it was just after the ascension of our Lord? Are vice, hardness of heart, old habits and iron prejudices easier overcome at the present time than they were then, or at any former period? Surely no one will assert this. Then why not wait, tarry, pray, for this gift of power, as they did, as Christ ordered them to do, until it fills our hearts and all our churches and places of worship as in the primitive age?

For want of this the world is leading the Church, instead of the Church leading the world, and leading it into many of its follies, gayeties, and into so-called innocent amusements. Many professors now are

"lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." \* The present formalities of worship with many are too mechanical and lifeless to affect the masses of men. They do not, cannot, will not, without the baptism of the Holy Ghost, as long experience has fully demonstrated. This divine baptism makes all things new in the pulpit and in the pews. Even vital truths, plainly recited and urged upon the people, are often powerless without it. "Without me ye can do nothing." How surprised many of us will be in the future life when we see what would have remedied the evils of society! yet we did not fully apply the remedy, though it was near at hand. Read the Saturday journals of any city to learn what is to be the Sabbath theme of many. Much of it is solemn trifling; it cannot be called preaching the gospel. Thousands of such sermons would not lead one sinner to Christ or teach him what he must do to be saved. Yet all these ministers complain of the venality and corruption of men in high and low positions. There is no remedy but the Holy Ghost to

\* "In Mr. Bennet's (Established) church, at Tresmere, in England, in 1742, a strange scene was witnessed. Charles Wesley was the preacher; and on his declaring that by 'harmless diversions' he had been 'kept dead to God, asleep in the devil's arms, secure in a state of damnation, for eighteen years,' Mr. Meriton, one of his traveling companions, added, aloud, 'And I for twenty-five.' 'And I,' cried Mr. Thompson, 'for thirty-five.' 'And I,' said Mr. Bennet, 'for above seventy.' This was quite enough (says the historian) to expose Thompson to the ecclesiastical anger of the bishop of the diocese."

fire the heart and constrain the ministers to preach Jesus Christ and him crucified. Other themes may please and make the ministry popular, but this alone is saving. You can usually ascertain the piety of a people by learning of the piety of their pastor. Does he live a life of faith? is he full of the spirit of self-sacrifice? has he been baptized with the Holy Ghost? Does he love his work, and labor, "not of constraint, but with a ready mind"? Does the love of Christ constrain him as it did those who were filled with love and power on the day of Pentecost? Does he "speak what he knows and testify of what he has felt and seen"? This kind of a man and this sort of preaching, and not the mere fact of orthodoxy, is sure to succeed because there is life in it. No healthy change in the morals of society has ever been effected by any other. It need not be expected until the power from on high rests on the laborers. This is Christ's plan, and the Church must come up to it if we would succeed. He has given the model of a successful Church. Why follow his teaching in all other matters and neglect to seek what he deemed so essential to that Church planted by himself?

## CHAPTER II.

### *HOLINESS THE BIBLE STANDARD OF PIETY.*

“Behold an Israelite indeed in whom is no guile.”

A TRUE standard of satisfactory religious experience is a necessity to the Church, and happily this has been duly furnished by the Lord himself. Holiness was engraved on a gold plate, and worn on the forehead of Aaron the high priest. Ex. xxiii. 36. All the people saw this during each service. It was designed to keep the idea before all worshipers continually. God is called “the Holy One of Israel.” The mountain whence the law was given was called “the holy mount.” And Peter so terms the mount of transfiguration. “Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy;” “Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the Lord your God;” “I am the Lord which sanctify you.”

The reply of Christ to the lawyer as to which was the most important commandment of the law fixes the standard of moral purity (Matt. xxii. 37): “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the



first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Obedience to all the other divine requirements follows as a consequence of obeying this. Here perfect love to God is fixed as the standard of piety. Love to others flows naturally from loving God fully, as a stream flows from its fountain. "He that loveth not his brother is not of God," no matter what his profession or standing in society. "He abideth in death." "Be ye perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect." "Till we all come in the unity of the faith . . . unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

These Scriptures fix holiness or perfect love as the standard of Christian piety. In a moral government a fixed rule of duty and privilege is a necessity. Deficiencies cannot be detected without this. Progress or decline might occur, but could not be measured, or even detected, without a fixed rule. All governments fix a standard of purity for the coins they issue for circulation, or correct business could not exist. The amount of alloy could not be detected; all values would be uncertain, and business confused and unsatisfactory.

The same is true in mechanics. The rule, the plummet, the straight-edge, the square and level, are indispensable to correctness. Without them all would be guess-work, doubt and uncertainty. The mariner might by good fortune navigate his vessel across the

ocean, perhaps without the sun or pole-star, those unerring guides, but what days and nights of sleepless anxiety and concern would he spend! In the life of piety which all are required to live, how terrible would be the distress were believers without an infallible rule of life and duty to assure them that they are right! To live up to the standard is to live a life of satisfaction, joyfulness and praise. To live below it, as so many thousands do, is to have a sense of fear, doubt and discomfort lest all is not right and will not be safe in the future. Conscience is clamorous and fear displaces love, the true rest of the soul. What a religion to preach to the unhappy, doubtful and disquieted multitude! Yet it is the best that can be offered if the great Author of the system has not fixed and published a satisfactory standard possible to the faith of the sincere and devout worshiper.

The minister who does not preach holiness or moral purity will not have a deeply spiritual people unless they receive the necessary light leading to inward life from some other source. It is quite impossible they should. Pardon or regeneration is not the divine standard, as we have above shown. It is a great grace, and satisfies for a time. It is not completeness, however; it does not come up to or fully meet and satisfy the longings of the soul, or the demands of the divine law which requires us to love God with "all the heart, soul, mind and strength." Regeneration is the beginning of holiness, but not its

extent and fullness. Believers should be urged to rise higher, to seek to be "cleansed from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Nothing short of this has God required, nothing less fully satisfies and gives true rest to the soul. He who does not preach this fails in duty both to God and those who hear him, and will not be satisfied with his own success as a gospel minister, or have a spiritual working people. It is rare indeed for hearers to hunger for a higher experience than they are taught is their present privilege.

How responsible, then, is the position of all ministers! It is really fearful to contemplate, and should cause a shudder to the unfaithful one, be his standing prominent or humble. Who that believes the verities of divine revelation, and thinks of the multitudes who may be lost through his failure to teach the true standard of piety, would not rather live the life of a beggar than that of a faithless, careless minister? The passage of only a few short years will tell whether we have built with "gold, silver and precious stones, or wood, hay and stubble." Christ is the foundation, "but let every man take heed how he buildeth thereon." Let each keep the standard in view, "holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."

#### INSPIRED TERMS

should not be exchanged for such as good men have often used, to avoid the reproach which some have

cast upon those which are used by the Spirit of inspiration. Because the gift of the Holy Ghost, holiness, perfection, perfect love and entire sanctification have been objected to, the modern phrase, *higher life*, has come into use quite generally. Those who use it are true men, there can be no doubt. We all use it more or less. Far be it from me to undervalue the sincerity, piety and deep sanctity of those who prefer it to other terms. They are doubtless far better men than the writer, but I nevertheless deem them in error in not using the "words which the Holy Ghost teacheth." Cleave to the Scriptures, and let there be no toning down the standard divinely established to meet the false taste of any. The righteous Judge is at the door, and will soon try our work, to see "of what sort it is."

Higher is only a comparative word, and of necessity carries the idea of a sliding-scale. There are all states and degrees of piety, from that of mere profession to that of St. John or an archangel. The one next above him who merely fears God is in a higher state than that of the one below him. Which of the states in the catalogue, which of the rounds in the spiritual ladder, do you mean when you say "the higher Christian life"? Are not those who use the phrase in danger of misleading the sincere inquirer after the true Bible standard of perfection? He seeks to be right, and you talk to him of "the higher life." It may have a conventional meaning that he may not understand, and lead him to think

that he enjoys that life when he is merely pardoned of his sins, though he well knows that the lusts of the flesh, of the eye and the pride of ambition are still within him. You may therefore deceive and mislead the sincere by the use of a term not sanctioned by the word of God. Inspired phrases are best, and should not be allowed to be substituted by those coined by good men. We are always safe in the use of Bible language.

PERFECT LOVE MAKES LIFE AND DUTY A CHARM.

“Makes the rough paths of peevish nature even,  
And opens in the breast a little heaven.”

To me there is nothing more offensive than the manner in which some speak of religion, and their own spiritual state in particular. It repels instead of attracting the unhappy man. They are always bad, feel unpleasant, unhappy, they have always been unlucky, full of fear for the future both of this life and the next, never clear in religious experience, always in doubt of their acceptance and the goodness of other people. The present is sad, gloomy and sour, the future promises only disaster, loss and calamity. They themselves are poor miserable offenders, and most others are no better, but much worse. Nor is this state of feeling occasional, but constant. Although I am well aware that we need the merit of Christ's death continually, yet somehow I have always had a repugnance to such doleful verbiage and sour piety. Such Chris-

tians, if they really deserve the name, which I seriously doubt, are somewhat improved in these latter years. Forty or more years ago they used to confess in the pulpit that "they broke all of God's commandments in word and deed every day of their lives," not thinking of all that this sweeping charge involves.

I confess that I feel a moving of benevolence for such gloomy believers, and how can I better show it than by commending them to the Psalms of David and the history of the Church after the day of Pentecost? "They eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart." And David says: "Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee." "He that offereth praise glorifieth me." Joy and praise were constant in the Church which Christ planted as a model for all time. We must come back to it, or the ungodly about us will never be won to Christ and his Church. Many ministers have adopted the driving method; Christ intended his Church should attract with the voice of joy, thanksgiving and praise. Which is right? Ananias was no doubt a sad specimen of a believer even then, and Simon Magus was perhaps the only sad and complaining Christian professor then in Samaria. "There was great joy in that city." "All the upright in heart" are commanded to rejoice, not complain of themselves or others. The writer has ever been very thankful that the type of piety set before him in his youthful days was according to the

standard above given, and therefore full of joyful songs of praise.

But few men have enjoyed life better than the writer. Everything has a cause. Will the reader pardon a brief personal reminiscence which accounts for it? When a small boy, I remember that a letter came to my father late in the afternoon. My mother sat beside him as he audibly read its sad details, informing him of the loss of a vessel in which he was principal owner. Near one-third of all his property was swept away in one short hour. Both parents were silent for a short space of time after reading the letter. Father seemed sad and silent for once in his life. Quick as a flash of lightning, mother sprang to her feet, pushed out the table to the centre of the room, saying, as she did so, "Let the old boat go; we have always had enough to eat, drink and wear, and shall have to the end of life. Let us have a good cup of tea and forget the loss." Father looked about the room and at us boys, sitting near, and said, with a smile, "How good it is to have a cheerful, trusting wife!" That is the sort of mother who cared for my childhood years ago. I should disgrace her memory by being sad and gloomy.

One more reminiscence. My sainted father was a man of deep and joyous piety. It was a common occurrence during my early boyhood for two elderly neighboring women, Mrs. Shourds and Mrs. Burton—let their names be immortalized!—to spend an evening occasionally at my father's house in religious

conversation, prayer and praise. The huge fire in the old-fashioned fireplace lit up the room most brilliantly without the need of any other means of light. They would sing the old hymns with such a joyous inspiration, the tears flowing over faces lit up with a smile that seemed to me almost angelic, and pray with such apparent rapturous communion with Him who was invisible, that my boyish heart was perfectly charmed. There and then were my religious tastes and character formed. I saw what religion did for them, how sweetly joyous they all were, and I said to myself, My piety, if I ever am so happy as to have any, shall be like theirs. They lived up to the standard, and therefore "rejoiced evermore, prayed without ceasing, and in everything gave thanks." Those two women, together with the joyous piety of my father, made me, under God, what I am. My life has been a joyful one from the first, through these examples set before me in very early years. How I have pitied the children of religious but gloomy parents God only knows. Those only who live up to the standard established by Christ himself, can maintain steady joy.

All who live a life of faith on the Son of God live joyfully. It cannot be otherwise. Comfort, with such, springs not from outward circumstances of honor or dishonor, wealth or poverty, health or sickness. They may be lauded or despised; but having the divine Comforter within them, "a well of water springing up, an unction from the Holy



One," they cannot well be sad for any length of time.

St. Paul describes them thus: "By honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things." "Rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." And St. Peter speaks in the same way: "Whom having not seen ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."

Is this all verbiage, and never meant to be realized in the life of believers? Who dare affirm this? The full blessings of the new covenant are realized by so few of us that we may have deemed ourselves straitened in the scheme of grace itself. What the world needs now is a Church "full of the Holy Ghost and of faith;" then the joy of the Lord will be the strength of its members, the absence of which is now its manifest weakness. "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, Rejoice." No man can be strong and persuasive either in preaching, prayer or religious testimony who is joyless. Where the Holy Ghost is there is joy, victory, triumph. So it was at first, so it has been ever since, and so it

will be to the end of time. Even Thomson in his "Seasons" says :

"Should fate command me to the farthest verge  
Of the green earth, . . . 'tis naught to me,  
Since God is ever present, ever felt,  
In the void waste as in the city full ;  
And where he vital breathes there must be joy."

## CHAPTER III.

### *SOPHISTRIES EXAMINED.*

“Consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.”

“**I**F any man do his will he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself,” was the language of Christ to the Jews. The history of the Church is uniform in this one point at least—that when piety and experience in divine things have been deep and joyful her doctrines have always been sound and scriptural. But as deep experience has more or less ceased by reason of wealth and worldly influence, errors fatal to her orthodoxy and life have always arisen, thus establishing the truth of our Lord’s words, “He who does the will of God,” and he alone, has a certain and satisfactory faith. Let any one search the history of the Church, and he will learn that those who “speak of what they know” experimentally are usually sure to be right; but when theory takes its place, sound doctrine more or less ceases, both in communities and individuals.

Theorists in every age are as apt to be sure and confident as were the mistaken friends of that suf-

ferer who said, "Oh that mine adversary had written a book!" thinking, perhaps, that was the surest and shortest way to an errorist's ruin, as well as to bring out the truth. Truth rarely loses by searching investigation. It may be well that secret doubts and misgivings concerning experience in the deep things of God should be fully brought out. They never fail to exist in the Church when piety and experience are low, and like poisonous humors in the blood will continue to irritate until brought to the surface and driven from the system. What we regret as an evil is often the means of lasting good. St. Paul rejoiced that the gospel was preached, "whether of contention or good-will."

Rev. J. T. Crane, D. D., presiding elder of Elizabeth district in the Newark Conference in New Jersey, has published a book of one hundred and forty-four pages in opposition to Mr. Wesley's views of entire sanctification, as well as the long-settled doctrine of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in which he is both a minister and an officer. I hear that he had prepared and read most of his volume as an essay before the preachers' meeting in the city of Newark. Whether his views have materially changed since his ordination, or since he was an open seeker of perfect love at the camp-meeting held near Morristown, New Jersey, in 1868, I do not know. However that may be, he now squarely antagonizes his own Church, deems Mr. Wesley in serious error, and labors to refute most of his argu-

ments proving a distinct work of holiness subsequent to conversion or justification.

Of course we who have known the brother in all his manhood's history were greatly surprised on reading his recent opinions. One would think it required more courage than he ever possessed to move him to attempt a task not only Herculean, but so hopeless of success. The explanation in part, perhaps, may be found in the fact of his having received his education at Princeton College, and not under Methodist influences. Our Church has stood very much alone in the advocacy and defence of this great gospel privilege of believers from the days of the Wesleys until within the past few years. The doctor's educators are sound, and lay much stress, as they should, on justification by faith. But they have always been more or less opposed to the Wesleyan view of holiness as a grace received subsequently, the doctor being of one mind with his instructors in teaching that all improvement in moral and spiritual character after justification is by culture and development only. This would naturally lead to the inference that educational prejudices have had much to do with forming his opinions, though the views of his instructors differ vastly from his as to the extent of spiritual grace conferred by justification itself.

To the reader at a distance it is proper that I should introduce my brother Crane. As he is a graduate of Princeton College, I suppose him, there-

fore, to be fairly educated. His talents are fair, but by no means brilliant or attractive, and therefore he is not likely to be accepted as a strong leader in any party. His natural manner is dry and devoid of sympathy or feeling, so necessary in impressing the hearers. That is a lack, however, much more common among ministers of average piety now than in former years, when piety was more warm and gushing. Brother Crane spent many years of his early manhood as principal of a seminary, preaching only occasionally, which, by fixing his habits, as is common in such cases, has prevented him more or less from ever being a popular and attractive pastor. The Church does not seem to think of the injury she is doing her young ministers by setting them to teaching instead of preaching after the finish of their education. The writings of the fathers and standard authors of the Church are by a sort of necessity more studied by a pastor, by which his mind and heart are much more improved than they can be by reading any of the text-books of the school curriculum. Here is much of the future danger to our Church, but I suppose there is no earthly power that can work a change. The character, earnest preaching and decided piety of many ministers greatly vary from what they were a few years since by reason of their course of reading.

Dr. Crane has published the first book I have ever seen written by a Methodist minister against a *cardinal doctrine* of our Church. Mr. Wesley says:

"God raised us up as a people to spread scriptural holiness over these lands;" and Brother Crane writes to prove that there is no higher holiness possible than that wrought in the penitent sinner when he receives the free pardon of all his sins.

The doctor calls his book "Holiness the Birthright of all God's Children." I intend neither a review nor reply to all the brother's crude statements—for so I must view them—not intending any offence, however. I really deem his positions simply absurdities, hardly worth a serious reply. My purpose is to exhibit the real state of the case, and to support the doctrines held and experienced by our people on the subject of holiness for more than a century, and to encourage all those whose "heart and flesh crieth out for the living God." I feel called on to do this because there are such vast numbers at the present time thus hungering who may be hindered in their aspirations by Brother Crane's very indiscreet utterances.

He says: "Hardly one in twenty of our ministers professes it, either publicly or privately, so far as I can learn. We preach it occasionally, but among our people its confessors are still fewer in proportion to numbers. Even among our bishops, from 1784 to the present day, confessors are as hard to find as in any other class of our people. The very princes of our Israel have been silent in regard to their own experience of it."

He then gives one or two personal references:

“The apostolic Wesley never professed it. Bishop Asbury did not profess it, and Hedding, though urged to do so in his last sickness, declined. A few have done it in the past, a few do it at the present time, but we cannot hide the fact that they are very few, compared with the multitude who do not. And why are they so few?”

He admits a low state of piety in the Church, and excuses it by asking, “When has it been otherwise? The twelve had a Judas among them, the Church was no purer in apostolic times than to-day, and our own Church is as moral and doing more than ever before.” It is rare indeed to find a minister reasoning against the outcry of the soul hungering for God. But here we have a Methodist preacher taking pains to convince our people that they are good enough—good as the fathers, the apostles and the New Testament Church. The conclusion that he intended to dissuade our people from seeking a higher piety is fair and legitimate, yet the author is a doctor of divinity, so called, and a presiding elder in our Church, holding the oversight of over five thousand full members, with many probationers. There are under his special supervision thirty-six traveling preachers, many of them young men of little reading in the history of the Church, and not fully masters of the grand doctrines or experiences on which it is founded. Will such teaching from the elder make any one on his district more zealous to do good, either in inducing a deeper piety among believers or in



leading sinners to Christ? The author's experience and teaching clearly answer his own question above, at least as far as his influence extends: "Why are there so few professing the higher life of holiness?"

But hear him further. After what he esteems Mr. Wesley's inconsistencies in stating the distinction between justification and sanctification, he reaches this conclusion: "The only real distinction affecting the question of practical obedience to God is therefore a theoretical one—that is, Mr. Wesley does not show in fact or experience that the most devout and holy are any better than the new convert or babe in Christ." And, worse yet, "Wesley himself manifestly fails to maintain his theoretical distinctions in regard to the two classes of Christians." So he deems that good man, great reasoner and voluminous writer defeated by a graduate of Princeton in only a few pages of his book. His proofs from theory and experience are failures. "Mr. Wesley's opinions on the subject up to 1747 were exceedingly indefinite, if not perplexed. . . . His views of Christian perfection were not well defined at the beginning, nor even at the end; and his various utterances, scattered as they are over a space of fifty years, furnish no complete and consistent theory on the subject. . . . Thus little by little the theory of a second distinct work grew up, and assumed what I cannot but regard as an unscriptural form. . . . But we must confess that to the last Mr. Wesley's methods of stating

and enforcing the doctrine (of holiness) were indefinite."

He then gives his opinion as to the reasons of this: "*I cannot resist the conviction that it was because it was based upon unsound principles.*"

But, to excuse Mr. Wesley in his sad mistakes, the doctor says that he was misled by the ninth article of the Church of England: "Original sin is the fault or corruption of the nature of every man that is naturally engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, . . . and this infection of nature doth remain—yea, in them that are regenerate." The doctor thinks that Mr. Wesley so loved the Established Church as to be led into the error of believing that some remains of the old nature, such as pride, envy, lust, anger and love of the world, remained in believers after conversion. This, Brother Crane deems a great mistake, unsound divinity, as the new birth perfectly cleanses the man, and he needs no further work to make him pure. "Holiness is his birthright," and it comes to him in his spiritual birth.

He also condemns Mr. Wesley's sermon on "Sin in Believers" as unscriptural, and says he was led to preach it by the bad conduct of Maxfield and Bell, two of his helpers. Inexperienced men—men of no purpose, who have no grand end in view to the accomplishment of which their lives are devoted—judge of great reformers by themselves. So it is in

this instance. Brother Crane thinks Mr. Wesley preached his sermon on "Sin in Believers" as an expedient to meet that case and merely to check the progress of these misguided men. In his view it had no other purpose.

The facts are these: An English prelate had ordained Count Zinzendorf to the episcopal office among the Moravians, and doubtless deemed it a capital stroke against Mr. Wesley. Thomas Maxfield, by the recommendation of Mr. Wesley, had been ordained by Dr. Barnard, bishop of Londonderry, the good bishop saying at the time, "Sir, I ordain you to assist that good man, Mr. Wesley, that he may not work himself to death." Mr. Maxfield was a ready, fluent speaker, and highly promoted by Mr. Wesley, and having married a lady of some wealth was lifted thereby above some of his brethren, and withal mixing more or less with Moravians who admired Bishop Zinzendorf, fell into the snare of the devil.

Bishop Zinzendorf believed that men were wholly sanctified at the time of conversion, just as Dr. Crane declares he believes. He said to Mr. Wesley, "Entire sanctification and justification are in the same instant. He never increases in the love of God; he loves entirely in the same moment, as he is entirely sanctified. He may grow in grace, but not in holiness. As soon as a man is justified the Father, Son and Holy Spirit dwell in his heart, and in that moment his heart is as pure as it ever will be."

Mr. Wesley asked, "Were not the apostles justified before the death of Christ?"

The count answered, "They were."

W. "But were they not more holy after the day of Pentecost than before the death of Christ?"

Z. "No—not in the least."

W. "Were they not on that day filled with the Holy Ghost?"

Z. "They were; but the gift of the Spirit had no reference to their holiness. It was the gift of miracles only."

That was the sort of teaching that so disturbed the work of Mr. Wesley for a short time, and led to the follies of Maxfield and Bell, and of which Dr. Crane makes so much account in his sad history. No marvel, either, for Zinzendorf, Maxfield and Bell held the same views now advocated by Brother Crane. He cleaves to the count and squarely opposes Mr. Wesley in this year of grace—the first Methodist preacher who has dared to do it since 1763. But the times having changed, he will hardly command as much space in history as did the two original seceders from Mr. Wesley's scriptural views.

On March 28, 1763, Mr. Wesley says, "I retired to Lewisham and wrote the sermon on 'Sin in Believers' in order to remove a mistake which some were laboring to propagate—that there is no sin in any that are justified."

I will quote a few sentences from this sermon: "Does sin remain in one that believes in Christ? Is

there any sin in them that are born of God, or are they wholly delivered from it? Let no one imagine this to be a question of mere curiosity, or that it is of little importance whether it be determined one way or the other. Rather it is a point of utmost moment to every serious Christian, the resolving of which very nearly concerns both his present and eternal happiness. I do not know that it was ever controverted in the primitive Church. All Christians were agreed, and, so far as I have observed, the whole body of ancient Christians who have left us anything in writing declare with one voice that even believers in Christ, till they are 'strong in the Lord and in the power of his might' (that is, sanctified), have need to 'wrestle with flesh and blood,' with an evil nature, as well as with principalities and powers" (temptations).

"The same testimony," he continues, "is given by all other churches besides the English—not only by the Greek and Romish Church, but by every Reformed Church in Europe, of whatever denomination."

Some carried this too far, and taught that sin was so strong, even in those that were born of God, that it brought them into bondage and had dominion over them. To avoid this error, those under the care of Count Zinzendorf fled to the other extreme, and taught, like Dr. Crane, that regeneration and entire holiness are the same thing and occur in the heart at the same moment; that those who were regenerated could never be more holy on this side of heaven.

But desiring to show the soundness of the Wes-

leyan and Methodist doctrine and the mischievous follies of Dr. Crane's views, I shall continue this discussion a little further in one more chapter. Brother Crane is a diocesan bishop for the time, like his predecessor, Count Zinzendorf, and therefore his fallacies should be exposed, or the views of young ministers under his care, as well as those in other places, may become alien to both Scripture and Methodism.

## CHAPTER IV.

### *REVIEW OF SOPHISTRIES.—Continued.*

“Rebuke them sharply that they may be sound in the faith.”

IT will be noticed that Dr. Crane's controversy is not with any modern writer, but with Mr. Wesley himself, the founder under God of the Church in which he is a minister and officer. As I seek truth and usefulness rather than controversy, I will give Mr. Wesley's description, first of the justified, and secondly of one made perfect in love.

#### THE JUSTIFIED.

“How God may work we cannot tell, but the general manner wherein he does work is this: Those who trusted in themselves, that they were righteous and had need of nothing, are, by the Spirit of God, applying his word, convinced that they are poor and naked. They see the wrath of God hanging over their heads, and feel that they deserve the damnation of hell. They cry unto the Lord, and he shows them that he hath taken away all their sins and opens the kingdom of heaven in their hearts—righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Knowing ‘they are justified freely by his blood,’ they ‘have

peace with God through Jesus Christ,' and the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts.

"In this peace they remain for days or weeks or months, and commonly suppose they shall not know war any more, till some of their old enemies, their bosom sins, or 'the sin that doth most easily beset them' (perhaps anger or desire), assault them again and thrust sore at them, that they may fall. Then arises fear that they shall not endure to the end, and often doubt whether God has not forgotten them, or whether they did not deceive themselves in thinking their sins were forgiven. Under these clouds, especially if they reason with the devil, they go mourning all the day long. But it is seldom long before their Lord answers for himself, sending them the Holy Ghost to comfort them, to bear witness continually with their spirits that they are the children of God. Then they are indeed meek and gentle and teachable even as a little child. *And now first do they see the ground of their hearts, which God before would not disclose to them, 'lest the soul should fail before him, and the spirit which he had made.'* Now they see all the hidden abominations there, the depths of pride, self-will and hell. Yet having the witness in themselves, 'Thou art an heir of God, a joint heir with Christ,' even in the midst of their fiery trial, then they feel an inexpressible hunger after a full renewal in his image, in righteousness and true holiness. Then God is mindful of the desire of them that fear him, and gives them a single eye and a pure



heart. He stamps on them his own image ; he fixes his abode in their soul, bringing them into the rest which remaineth for the people of God."

There is the process, the way in which God leads the soul to himself, making him an heir first in pardon and justification, and then, in process of time, as he is able to bear the light "by reason of age," leads him into the full "rest that remaineth for the people of God."

Which description of the state of the justified, that of Dr. Crane or of Mr. Wesley, suits best the experience of the justified reader?—the former, declaring that justification and entire sanctification, or perfect cleansing from all pride, anger and worldly desire, are the same work and occur at the same time ; or the latter, that sanctification, or entire cleansing, is a subsequent work, and occurs at a later period? I would be willing to rest the question just here, to be decided by experience alone:

My own recollection of the hour

"When from above  
I first received the pledge of love"

places me precisely where Mr. Wesley places the new convert. Were Brother Crane's views correct, I should be compelled to admit that I was deceived, had been misled by the teachings of the fathers and was really in the gall of bitterness at the time I was singing lustily

"Oh how happy are they  
Who their Saviour obey!"

for in a few days after that happy hour I felt the risings of anger and petulance, teaching me that the remains of sin yet lingered within, causing me great searching of heart and a deep hungering for more of the mind of Christ.

From personal experience, therefore, and a long life of pastoral service, in which I have had to encourage thousands of new converts, both illiterate and educated, wise and unwise, rich and poor, I am compelled to say that Brother Crane's doctrines have never been sustained in a single case.

Nay, more, from what I know of Brother Crane, together with myself and many other ministers in my own Church, if his teaching be true, I am compelled to conclude that we were never truly born of God, for we were not, when converted, fully cleansed from undue love of the world, pride and selfishness. Why does he, and why do others of us, so desire the praise of men as to thirst for distinctions and ministerial titles? Why join so many secret societies to gain a popular standing among irreligious men? All may be innocent of positive sin; and so believing, the keen eye of the world sees and excuses it as perfectly human. So, too, the Church looks at it with an eye of charity. But they nevertheless know that in both cases the purpose is rather the honor that cometh from men than the glory of God.

It proves one thing at least, and that is that most of us are not made perfect in love. But whether it equally proves that we are not born of God and in a

state of grace demands a doubt. If, however, Dr. Crane's position be true that the new birth ensures an entire freedom from all the remains of sin and "the carnal desires of the flesh," then the consequence is irresistible: all who desire and seek honor from men, or for more of the world's goods than supplies their necessities, have not the love of God in them. They have not "passed from death unto life." I am sure that neither my brother, nor any who believe with him, will admit the sequence, and I am equally sure they cannot evade or destroy the logical conclusion from their own premises. We shall therefore have to cleave to Mr. Wesley's views of justification on strictly logical principles. If I were permitted to utter an opinion, it would be this: Men in the doctor's position who hold and publish such views will yet renounce them as untenable, or will change their Church relations before many years, as did Maxfield and Bell in the days of the Wesleys. Other historical facts which I will not name also lead to this inference.

We have seen Mr. Wesley's description of the justified; now let us hear him on

#### THE SANCTIFIED.

"For he is pure in heart. Love has purified his heart from envy, malice, wrath and every unkind temper. It has cleansed him from pride, whereof 'only cometh contention,' and he hath now put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind,

meekness, long-suffering. And, indeed, all possible ground for contention on his part is cut off. For none can take from him what he desires, seeing he 'loves not the world, nor any of the things of the world,' but all his desire is unto God and to the remembrance of his name."—"Works," vol. vi., pp. 487, 493.

These extracts show the practical mind of Mr. Wesley. He is not apt to deal in dry definitions only, but to show the processes by which men become both justified and sanctified, with their effects on them personally. Interrogate any truly experienced believer, even though he has never read Mr. Wesley's description of the process of the work of grace in the soul. Ask him if this is not in accordance with his own experience? Ask him if his struggles and victory over pride and the risings of evil within him were not as Mr. Wesley describes them? It accords so precisely with my own experience, and with that of all whom I have heard testify, that I am compelled to believe it true in the history of every believer's life.

History repeats itself in each successive generation. Dr. Scott the commentator, and Dr. Chalmers the great Scotch preacher, whose names will be honored while the world endures, as well as both the Wesleys, preached for many years without suspecting that they were not all the time regenerate men. The two latter, with others, had lived so strictly, visited the sick and poor, given all their surplus in-

come to feed and clothe the hungry and naked, that they, with others of like spirit, received the name of "*the holy club.*" They sacrificed home and ease by becoming missionaries among the heathen Indians. Never were there more sincere, laborious or self-sacrificing men than the two Wesleys before they had "learned the way of God more perfectly." Yet they were all this time in an unregenerate state, or at least had not learned the way of faith. Faith had not yet come—the faith that saves and the grace that renews and adopts into the family of God, filling with joyfulness.

As an inference from all this, in looking at the churches, the worldliness, love of pleasure and amusements, and the little care for the perishing about them, and no seasons of joy and praise, I am compelled to think that many who now fill the pulpits as well as the pews of the churches in this land are in a condition similar to that in which the distinguished men above named said they unexpectedly found themselves.

I know that my heart is full of charity to all men, though I thus speak. There is a standard of both the grace of pardon and purity. If there were not, the world would be in a sad condition. Love all men as we may—and "love does hide a multitude of sins"—we dare not deceive any man, though he were a father or brother. A man's tongue, like that of Peter, will usually betray his nationality in spite of himself. If a man "be risen with Christ, he will

seek the things that are above, where Christ sitteth ;" there will be his tastes and desires. If it be possible to be otherwise, and yet be a Christian, none would like to know it better than the writer. Like Luther, he must say, "I can do no other, God help me."

It was not my intention, but I will, notwithstanding, let my readers hear Brother Crane a little farther in proof of what I have said : "That one born of God and made a new creature is still depraved, earthly, *sensual* and *devilish* is a startling proposition. It requires positive proof before it can be accepted." No one ever asserted such a thing. He has set up a man of straw. He admits elsewhere that Mr. Wesley is clear on justification, exalting it very high. Again : "When the blind man came, saying, Lord, that I might receive my sight, Christ did not cure one eye, and then require a new repentance and a new act of faith before he touched the other. When he healed the lame, it was not by a partial cure which sent him away limping. (Yes, my dear doctor, but Jacob did go away limping.) Why should the inner salvation be less thorough than the outward? He said to the bystanders at the tomb of Lazarus, 'Loose him, and let him go.' Can we suppose that Christ's power over spiritual death is less complete? For what purpose is depravity left? In all that God has revealed of himself or of his plans, I see nothing that explains why the seeds of sin should be left in the regenerate. . . . Surely He who half cleanseth the heart can make it wholly clean.

Wherefore must [the new convert] begin his heavenward flight with a broken wing?"

I blush at reading this, and am silent.

He then calls for the Scriptures which sustain this residue theory. But what use is there of our doing this? The clear proofs presented by Mr. Wesley he attempts to sweep away, and seems to think he has done it with a few strokes of his pen. Gal. v. 17: "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." No clearer text can be adduced; and yet he goes into an argument to prove that these were not believers at all, they had "fallen from grace," had lost all they ever had, because the apostle reproves their folly for adopting a few precepts of the Mosaic law, and were trying to practice them in connection with Christian duty. St. Paul tells them so far as they lean on the law they fall away from the gracious system of Christ and the one sacrifice for sin. As if a true convert, brought up in the Romish Church, should by force of education pray to the Virgin or the saints! His pastor or brethren would say, "How foolish you are! If you look to others for help, you forsake Christ, who alone can aid you." Would they deem such a one wholly backslidden? No; they would do as Paul did—pity the error springing from a tender conscience—and say to the others, Help him, you who are otherwise trained, and "restore him in the spirit of meekness." Don't be

offended at him because of his weakness. How easy is the exegesis to a non-partisan!

Thus the doctor treats all the Scriptures quoted by Mr. Wesley. Yet (1 Cor. iii. 1, 3, 4, and 2 Cor. vii. 1), "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness," etc., on which he boldly says St. Paul "certainly includes himself" because he uses the pronoun *us* and *ourselves*—a form of speech used universally now as then by all wise speakers and writers, as it is less offensive and more soft than *you* and *yourselves*. So did St. James when reproving an evil: "Therewith bless *we* God, even the Father, and therewith curse *we* men." The same mode of reasoning would make St. James a profane man.

With all deference to the opinion of Dr. Crane to the contrary, I claim that these plain Scriptures do sustain the Wesleyan theory, and leave the world to judge between us, or rather between his novel exegesis and the plain common sense of Mr. Wesley and all the fathers of the Church. He calls for Scripture proofs. In the sixth chapter of Isaiah we read how God required the prophet to perform a difficult duty. He had not the necessary courage in view of the consequences to himself. In this extremity he was shown a vision which made him cry out: "I am a man of unclean lips." But when the live coal had purified his lips, God saying at the time "thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin is purged," then he was ready to go without further reluctance. He was evidently



a good man and a true prophet, in favor with God before, but a very different man afterward—bold and fearless, as was the church in Jerusalem after the Holy Ghost had come upon them.

How full of timidity and worldly ambition were the apostles of our Lord while he was yet with them! All this is clear enough to the sincere reader, it seems to me. But were I to cite a score of Scriptures, it would do no good. He asks for one Scripture proof, and says "it will be sufficient." Of course he will find some way of showing that the case of the prophet and his confession, as well as the imperfect spiritual condition of the disciples, are not to the point, or that neither myself nor Mr. Wesley understood the Scriptures we adduce, so that there is really no use of my quoting other passages.

But time and space would fail me to follow this ministerial brother, yet unsafe commentator, through his unfortunate book. If he does not find it unfortunate for himself, why then my observation in the past years of my life has done very little good in maturing my judgment.

Suppose our Church were to adopt his theories? What consequences would then be inevitable?

1. We, as a Church, would be compelled to drop Mr. Wesley's name out of all our books, expurgating every volume containing his name and teaching, for his writings everywhere are full of holiness as received after pardon and justification—his sermons, letters, poetry, so greatly admired, read

by so many millions, and which have helped so many more millions to reach the land of the blessed and holy. His preaching and writings have made us a people who were before no people, as well as started into new spiritual life all other denominations in this and all lands. For this second blessing of holiness was his main doctrine, for the spreading of which over all the world he says "God raised him and the Methodists up." Are we ready for this? No! will be uttered in thunder tones from myriads of voices in all the earth. A small animal may bark at the moon, but that beautiful orb will still go on just the same. Therefore there is no fear but that a doctrine so scriptural, and realized experimentally by so many, will stand all tests, crucial or puerile.

2. Our discipline must be abandoned or greatly altered. It is based upon the teachings of the Bible as preached by Mr. Wesley. And Dr. Crane has tried to show that he is not a safe guide in the most vital doctrinal matters. It requires the bishops to ask each candidate for ordination, all of whom are supposed to be converted, regenerated men, "*Do you expect to be made perfect in love in this life? Are you groaning after it?*" This must be eliminated as unscriptural and impertinent. The reader can see a score of other matters in that little book which must be expunged if Dr. Crane's views ever prevail in our Church.

3. The most beautiful hymns of the two Wesleys

must be blotted out from our collection—that soul-stirring chain of biblical poetry,

“He breaks the power of *canceled* (or pardoned) *sin*,  
He sets the prisoner free.”

“Oh, glorious hope of *perfect love*.”

“Break off the yoke of inbred sin,  
And *fully* set my spirit free.”

“The *seed of sin's* disease,  
Spirit of health, remove.”

“Scatter the *last remains of sin*,  
And seal me thine, above.”

“Let anger, sloth, desire and pride  
This moment be subdued.”

Our whole book is full of the theme of holiness; there are sixty-eight hymns under the head of sanctification alone, and all in the Wesleyan view of that grace as subsequent to the work of regeneration.

4. It would certainly close all our class-meetings and love-feasts. Few of our people have enjoyed these means of grace at any time unless their hearts were full of love. And now those professing to enjoy Christian purity are almost the only ones who give them life and spirit. Our people will not therefore yield to the follies of such as oppose this fundamental doctrine of the system of belief and worship which they have so long loved.

Had I the ear of all our bishops, I would venture

a word of counsel. It would be this: While we yield to every man the right to his own private opinions, we should be careful whom we appoint to the office of presiding elder of a district. They should be sound in Methodist views, or they necessarily injure the work of the pastors. If the bishop is doubtful, he should require an interview and a close examination. The Church will be greatly injured if care is not used just here. It is a point of vast moment in preserving Church unity. I saw a letter a few months since from a young minister craving counsel of a senior. He had experienced the grace of perfect love, and his presiding elder had peremptorily forbidden him to preach it or say anything about it among the people. What should he do? The elder could injure him greatly in the conference if he disobeyed him, and he feared spiritual loss if he failed to do his duty to God and his own convictions.

Some of the ministers under Dr. Crane's care and supervision may be young and inexperienced, not yet admitted into conference. Their admission must more or less depend upon his favor. How much injury he and his book will do among these, not to speak of the members who are hungering for God, of course cannot be known except to the great Head of the Church. He will of course preach according to his views, and circulate the books by announcing them for sale or by employing others to sell them for him.

What are our people to do? Many of them have never read Mr. Wesley's sermon on "sin in believers," or if they have, may be persuaded that the modern Church requires a change of standard views, as some vainly say. If no other ministers as eligible for the elder's office can be found, or there are those for whom no other place is open because not desired by the people, better by far for the Church that such be left without appointments and supported by their more gifted brethren than to allow the seeds of division to be sown on a wide ground by giving such a place of oversight and influence over those who fully endorse the views of our Church on one and all of her vital doctrines. The superintendents must take this responsibility; the Church expects it at their hands, and they will not fear it if they are the right men for their honored position.

The same caution ought to be exercised by the General Conference in appointing editors of all our official periodicals. Better stop all official presses than to allow them to be engines of discord and division, turning away the ear and heart of both ministers and people from the great doctrines of the Bible and undeniable Christian experience. Gospel doctrines touching religious experience are too vital to our whole work to be tampered with by agents employed by the Church to spread and uphold her influence. Nor should such a course be allowed for a single year in the term of an officer. It has not been allowed heretofore. A bishop should hold a

presiding elder strictly to his own work, and the Book Committee should exercise similar authority over all official editors. God and the Christian world expect us to be faithful to our trust, and not allow unsound men to spread doctrinal discord among our people.

## CHAPTER V.

### *OPINIONS OF LEADING WRITERS.*

“Multitude of years should teach wisdom.”

HAVING promised to “banish and drive away all false and strange doctrines contrary to God’s word,” I deem it an especial duty to oppose such doctrines as are most likely to bewilder and mislead the young and inexperienced in spiritual life. For the benefit of such as have just entered on a course of piety, and not merely in reply to the arguments of any one, I feel compelled to say a few words more in the beginning of this chapter in relation to the book before referred to.

Quite sure am I that any one who had just entered into the new spiritual life of a gracious state, if he were to read Brother Crane’s book, would not know himself. Darkness would follow at once. He would feel his feebleness and fear, with occasional doubts as to whether his change ought to be relied on as genuine. He would turn away, if he believed what he read, and say, “I was mistaken; I am yet in my sins.” How little theorists dream of the mischief they do by a few strokes of their pens! Isaac put the blessing on the wrong man, being deceived. But it is hard to deceive a sincere man into a belief of his

own purity when he doesn't feel it. He cares not for your dogmas. The doctrine would be new to him. A man may dream when asleep that he is rich, but will know better when he awakes.

Dr. Crane's doctrine is new to Methodism. Our people have not been so taught before. A few inconspicuous persons in New York, in 1827, who held views similar to his, made some talk, but did no good. A Mr. Waldo was their principal man. One of them caused the writer some trouble by reason of his unsubdued temper, in Morristown, in 1828, at the beginning of the great revival. He made a few converts to his theories, but they soon forgot them after he left the town. He professed holiness because he had been regenerated and adopted, and loved to argue the question just as Dr. Crane has done. His reasoning was precisely similar; yet his temper was so irascible that I feared to reason with him about his views. But, like all other fallacies, it soon died out. God did not give it what is always deemed his sanction—success. It therefore vanished away without leaving a scar on the Church—the fate which I predict for Brother Crane's views. In a large communion like ours, where the evidence of the incipient work of grace greatly varies in its clearness—one being certain and another doubtful whether the change was real or deceptive—such views will occasionally be held; for we, as a people, attach more importance to a clear knowledge of sins forgiven in the outset than most churches.



Our conferences have hitherto watched with much care every stray from Methodist doctrine in our ministry. We have been wise in so doing, as we have thereby preserved our own unity. As this of Dr. Crane's is the first book that has been published by one of our ministers in opposition to our standard doctrines on this subject, as preached by Wesley and the fathers, we shall see whether the brethren of the Newark Conference will let it pass unobjected to.

This is no "question of mere curiosity," as Mr. Wesley says, "or of little importance whether it be determined one way or another. Rather it is a point of utmost moment to every serious Christian, the resolving of which very nearly concerns both his present and eternal happiness."

Experience has taught all practical and spiritually-minded pastors that this is true. Were any one professing a spiritual change to be told by a pastor in whom he confided that he was now cleansed from "all filthiness of the flesh and spirit"—that he would henceforth feel no anger, pride, revenge or lust—how long would it be before he came to the conclusion that he had been deceived, that really no change had as yet taken place within him? I am sure this would have been the case with the writer, and but few are, or ever have been, more clearly converted and regenerated than he was; and I cannot now call up a single new convert in the course of a somewhat extended ministry but would have been in similar doubt and perplexity. Satan's devices are multiform;

and perhaps the views published by Brother Crane are the most dangerous to the stability of faith, in those recently born of God, of any that could be uttered. The doctor, as it seems to me, would be a bad counselor of young converts in the time of revivals.

What say the leading authorities? In a controversy like the one Doctor Crane assumes, and in which he takes ground new and strange, it is natural to inquire, What say the fathers in the Church, the leading writers and leading names of the most deeply devoted to God, men who have been taught of the Spirit in the deep things of God? This last means of light is more important than most professors are apt to think. "The natural man understandeth not the things of the Spirit, they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

Hear the Rev. John Wesley: "When does inward sanctification begin? In the moment a man is justified. Yet sin remains in him—yea, the seed of all sin—till he is sanctified throughout. Does sin remain in one that believes in Christ? Is there any sin in them that are born of God, or are they wholly delivered from it? Let no one imagine that to be a question of mere curiosity. It is a point of utmost importance to all Christians."

"When born again, are we entirely changed? Are we wholly transformed into the image of Him that created us? Far from it; we still retain a

depth of sin, and it is the consciousness of this which constrains us to groan for a full deliverance to Him who is mighty to save. The new birth is not the same as sanctification."

Hear the Rev. John Fletcher: "We do not deny that the remains of the carnal mind still cleave to imperfect Christians. The same spirit of faith which initially purifies our hearts when we cordially believe the pardoning love of God completely cleanses them when we fully believe his sanctifying love."

Hear the Rev. Richard Watson: "That a distinction exists between a regenerate state and a state of entire and perfect holiness will be generally allowed. To prove this, two passages only need be quoted. 1 Thess. v. 23: 'And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.' 2 Cor. viii. 1: 'Having these promises, dearly beloved (regenerated certainly), let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God,' the entire sanctification of the soul and spirit, as well as of the flesh and body, from all sin, *all inward depravation* of the heart.

"The apostles set before all believers, both in the prayers they offer in their behalf and in the exhortations they administer, a still higher degree of deliverance from sin, as well as a higher growth in Christian virtues."

Hear Dr. George Peck. After a long argument, with a variety of proofs, he reaches this conclusion: "The result, then, to which I come is that the theory which asserts that entire sanctification invariably takes place when a man is justified *is inconsistent with fact and experience.*" He then goes on to prove it by many Scriptures, and adds: "The doctrine of entire sanctification, as a distinct work wrought in the soul by the Holy Ghost, is the great distinguishing doctrine of Methodism. This given up, we have little left which we do not hold in common with other evangelical denominations." "The position that justification and entire sanctification take place at one and the same time, and that regeneration and entire sanctification are identical, is clearly contrary to the position taken by our standard theologians." "Would it not be a sad indication of the degeneracy of Methodism in this country if what Mr. Wesley, under God our great founder, considered heresy, and opposed with all his might, should be cherished as the very marrow of the gospel by the ministers and people of the Methodist Episcopal Church?"

Dr. George Peck, here quoted, is the venerable father-in-law (still living) of Dr. Crane. The father is sound, Methodistic and scriptural; the son-in-law is neither, as we have already seen. The blessed Master said that "the father would be against the son, and the son against the father." Herein is this prediction fulfilled. The father threw all his influ-

ence during a long life in favor of the full sanctification of believers ; the son has done all he could to induce them to be content with the first incipient work of grace in their hearts, telling them they are fully cleansed already. What a pity that young opinionated men cannot be induced to be quiet until experience fully teaches them what philosophy and books never can teach !

Bishop Foster : "Believers are not by virtue of the new birth entirely free from sin, either as it respects the inward taint or outward occasional act. I need scarcely insist upon this, it is so universally the faith of the Church. Let any Christian clearly interrogate his experience and consciousness upon this point, and see whether the immediate response will not be that, though pardoned and consciously born of the Spirit, still there are sinful tendencies and dispositions lurking in his heart ; he is not entirely empty of sin, he is not entirely holy. He will find pride, envy, jealousy, anger, impatience, love of the world, dissimulation, self-willedness and such like."

"But sin committed and depravity felt are very different ; the one is an action, the other a state of the affections. But it is asked, Is not the work of God perfect in regeneration ? Regeneration is incipient sanctification in this sense—it is of the same nature ; it is included in entire sanctification, but is not so extensive ; it is a degree, but not the whole, of that work."

Dr. Adam Clarke says : "I have been twenty-three

years a traveling preacher, and have been acquainted with some thousands of Christians during that time who were in different states of grace, and I never, to my knowledge, met with a single instance where God both justified and sanctified at the same time."

Our own Church requires all her ministers at their ordination to answer these questions affirmatively: "Have you faith in Christ?" meaning, Are you regenerated? "Are you going on to perfection?" "Do you expect to be made perfect in love in this life?" "Are you groaning after it?" The Church presumes, of course, that no man would seek ordination unless he was a regenerated, pious man. She requires him to seek a higher experience—namely, perfection in love. He must believe in it, expect it, groan after it, or declare he does, or the bishop would not lay his hands on his head. Dr. Crane has either changed his doctrinal views, or he was not sincere at the time of his ordination. Which alternative will he accept? If he has changed his views, which he has a perfect right to do, he is bound as an honest man to change his Church relations and join a party with whose views he can affiliate. It would not take the writer long to decide the case were he in his circumstances.

DR. FULLER.

Rev. Richard Fuller of Baltimore, a delegate to the Evangelical Alliance Meeting in New York, and a distinguished Baptist minister, read a paper before

that body, from which I will take a few extracts, to show that experience is the same in all communions on the doctrine of sin in believers and their need of the cleansing power of divine grace subsequent to regeneration.

“It is a melancholy fact that we have all been sadly disappointed in the hopes which inspired our hearts when we were first converted to God. Having tasted the love of Jesus, rejoicing in him with a joy unspeakable and full of glory, we believed that we were for ever delivered from the solicitations of sin. But too soon this joy withered away from us; too soon the truth broke in bitterly upon us that we were not wholly sanctified; too soon we were amazed and humbled by the consciousness of remaining corruptions. Is this, however, to be for ever the Christian’s experience? Must the prodigal even after his return still be continually grieving his Father? Must God be always thus dishonored by the motions of sin in his own children? Is it necessary that a cloud should ever separate between Jesus and the soul he has redeemed? We can scarcely adopt a system which so mocks the highest, holiest aspirations of the ‘new creature.’ Surely God has not quickened in us a hungering and thirsting after holiness which is not to be filled. ‘The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.’ This cannot mean that there is to be in us a fountain for ever sending up impure and poisonous waters? No, and

again no. Let us not be calculating how much a Christian must sin; let us not be examining carefully how much sinning is indispensable to true orthodoxy; let us not vacate the exceeding great and precious promises of the Bible and limit the Holy Spirit, by whom we are sanctified, and depreciate the efficacy of that faith 'which purifies the heart,' of that hope which engages us to 'be pure as Christ is pure,' and thus deduct from the virtue of that atonement the effect of which should be that we walk in the security of an imputed and in the joy of an imparted righteousness.

"Nor will it avail much for our growth in personal holiness that we specify the besetting sin and peculiar hindrances with which each Christian has to contend, some of which are in the body, others in the mind, others in the heart—the most formidable in the imagination. Nor will a cure be made by prescribing the usual antidotes and precautions, such as fasting and prayer and meditation and reading the word of God. No. Pondering for years this eternally momentous subject, with much prayer, many tears and after most mortifying experiences, one great truth now possesses me with all the certainty of perfect conviction. It is that with the children of God the chief cause of such deplorable deficiency in holiness is the defect in our conceptions as to the way of holiness revealed in the gospel. Enlightened as to a full, free, present forgiveness through faith in Jesus, the error of those who go to the law, to their own



efforts, for absolution from the penalty of sin seems to us the strangest blindness; but we forget that salvation from the power and corruption of sin—from sin itself—must be in the same way.

“Coming to Jesus, casting your soul with all its interests upon him, you received all you came for. You experienced the peace and blessedness of pardon; and such was the gratitude and love glowing in your bosom that, ‘being made free from sin, you became servants of righteousness.’ But did this deadness to sin continue? Did the expulsive potency of this new affection permanently dislodge the evil propensities of your nature? On the contrary, no mortification can be more substantial than that you have felt at the revival of the life and power of sin within you. And now, why is this? Why but that you sought holiness by the law, and not by faith? Nothing could be more sincere than your resolutions, promises and efforts, but the humbling sense of their utter insufficiency caused you in anguish to exclaim, ‘O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?’ Nor did you find relief, peace, strength, victory over your corruptions, until you repaired to the Fountain open for sin and uncleanness—until, looking to Jesus as you did at first for pardon, you uttered that exultant shout, ‘I thank God through Jesus Christ, our Lord.’

“‘Abide in me,’ says Jesus—‘in me,’ not in a Church, ‘in me,’ not in your own works. Of course

the life of every true disciple of the Redeemer will be a life of self-denial. Every evangelical grace supposes and requires daily self-denial. Nor only so. The sins most fatal to Christians require and suppose self-denial; for it is not through insincerity or evil intentions, but through indolence, effeminacy, excess in lawful things, that those who are really converted so often dishonor the holy name they bear and pierce themselves through with many sorrows. Yet for all this, it is true that in subduing our depravities one act of faith is worth a whole lifetime of attempted faithfulness. As the smallest skiff, if sound, will bear a passenger to a richly-furnished ship, so the feeblest act of faith, if it be genuine, will unite the soul to Him in whom dwelleth all the treasures of grace and strength, and who ‘of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.’

“Let us not be imposed upon by external triumphs. The true kingdom of Jesus is spiritual and interior. It is the empire of truth over the mind, of holiness over the heart and the life. Inward sanctity, pure, constraining love to God and man, sincere obedience where Jesus reigns,—these are the elements of his sovereignty, and without these no outward homage can make us his real disciples.

“If we are to be useful in winning souls, in advancing the true interests of the Redeemer, the secret is not genius nor learning; it is, as David declares, a clean heart, the constant presence and power of the

Holy Ghost. If we are to enjoy spiritual happiness, if the joy of the Lord is to be our strength, the conscience must be purified from the stain of sin, and we must live every day in the consciousness of entire consecration to Jesus. 'The kingdom of God,' the reign of Christ, is 'righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.' It is first holiness, then peace and blessedness."

This extract shows how near all churches are coming to each other—how near we are in doctrine, in our views and in experience. By cleaving closely to the divine oracles we shall soon all be one in Christ Jesus. The outlook is truly hopeful.

## CHAPTER VI.

### *TESTIMONY OF EXPERIENCE.*

“We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen.”

REV. JOHN WESLEY.

THAT there are enemies to the recent movement in this land to promote Scriptural holiness should surprise no one. Some may see danger in it, while others abhor it because they neither see nor feel their own needs. Their opposition is indirect rather than direct. They wish to discourage rather than oppose directly; hence the doctor says that Wesley and the fathers of the Church never professed perfect love. “The great body of our people do not now; the leading minds shun it generally.” Dr. Crane is a little bolder than others of like opinions, hear him in his new theology to defend a theory and prevent his readers from seeking or professing holiness; I really can see no other motive: “Paul the aged, the inspired apostle of Christ, in the twenty-sixth year of his ministry, and only six years before his martyrdom, confesses that he is not cleansed.” We shall not be surprised after this.

The doctor catalogues the fathers who never pro-

fessed holiness. This he need not have done if it is true that St. Paul and Mr. Wesley carried the scars of inbred sin with them to their graves crying, "O wretched man that I am!" In such a case we who preach perfect love are defeated. We need a new translation of the New Testament, from which the words holiness and perfect love are blotted out. Like the stars, such a state of grace may be beautiful to look at; but being too far off, we need not hope to reach it while in the body. It looks cruel to set a smoking feast before a hungry, starving man, and yet keep it so far off he cannot taste it. This kind of discouraging preaching has been too common. God requires no more than he enables us to render. When he says, "Be ye holy, for I the Lord your God am holy," he means a purity which can be attained by us. Any other presumption would dishonor God, by making him a hard master, laying on us burdens we could not bear. He invites all men to a fellowship with himself, in holy communion, in joyous worship.

Mr. Wesley is said never to have professed perfect love. He was a prudent man, I know, and I admire that in him. The storm of opposition was fearful. His profession would prove nothing. He knew this well, and appealed only to the Scriptures; but his silence in relation to his own experience in perfect love is no more marked than on his regeneration. "His heart was strangely warmed," that is all. Why not deny that he was justified and regenerated be-

cause he said so little about it? The argument would be equally true and strong in one case as in the other. Where do we hear him say he had the witness of his adoption? He was wise in sustaining both states of grace, the higher and the lower, by the word of God alone.

But Mr. Wesley did profess perfect love, Mr. Tyerman and my good friend Dr. Crane to the contrary notwithstanding. So I believe and will try to show. In a letter to Lady Huntingdon, he says: "Many years since, I saw that without holiness no man shall see the Lord. I began following after it, and inciting all with whom I had any intercourse to do the same. Ten years after, God gave me a clearer view than I had before of the way how to obtain this—namely by faith in the Son of God." A clear statement that God fully revealed his Son in him. "And immediately I declared to all, *we are saved from sin, we are made holy by faith*. This I testified in private, in public, in print, and God confirmed it by a thousand witnesses." "God gave me to see." This is strong personal testimony. We accept such testimony now as a profession of personal experience without cavil; why deny it in Mr. Wesley? And he showed the fruits instantly; he told the story in all possible forms. Men in doubt do not do this; confident, assured men can't keep silent. "What he had felt and seen with confidence he told." 'Tis always so. No historical fact is better sustained by collateral testimony. Thousands came into the same rich ex-

perience by hearing him preach it, "with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." God does not witness to what is false. "I have continued to declare this for above thirty years, and God hath continued to confirm the word of his grace."

This is profession enough to satisfy us—yea, all who have tasted of God's perfect love. But the one who has prejudged the case objects. To such no proof is satisfactory. After that his life resembled, not that of the apostles prior to Christ's death, but that of their ministry after the Holy Ghost had come on them at Pentecost. They were converted men before, as was Mr. Wesley, but neither had strength enough to face the world, mobs and death, until the Holy Ghost came to fill them with "power from on high." The apostles gave no better evidence of this full power from on high in all their after lives than did this same John Wesley. Compare their history as I have done, and you will see it.

He urged all, both preachers and people, to seek holiness. The work could not go on without it. He urged all who had it to profess it. Did any one ever say to him, "Physician, heal thyself"? Had he not professed it, this would have been said over and over again. No man can preach an experience with success that he has not himself. I know the map of England by study, but could not advise a traveler there which road to take if he were bewildered. One who had traveled the roads, though unable to read,

would be a better guide than I. Apply this to Mr. Wesley, as a guide in the way of holiness, and you will be compelled to admit that he both enjoyed and professed the blessing of the higher life which he preached to others. All saw and felt the truth when he preached it, because it was "in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life." His letter to Dr. Dodd does not contradict this, as I shall now try to prove.

It has been the wonder of many that Mr. Wesley should have made the doctrine of holiness, as a distinct gift of grace, so prominent in his teaching during his long life, and yet say so little of his own experience of its benefits. But we have seen that he said as little of regeneration—his first change from nature to grace. A single remark as to the "strange warming of his heart" in Aldergate street was sufficient. If he ever wrote another line concerning his own regeneration, I have lost the recollection of it. Who ever disputed, or even doubted, that he was spiritually regenerated because of his silence in relation to it? Men who lead the devotions of the Church usually say much more of their spiritual state than they write. But few of the leading writers referred to above say a word of their own experience. This there can be no doubt was the case with him, because the world was watching for an opportunity to entangle him by his written statements. He was therefore extremely cautious, and desired to establish the faith of his people, as well as all who



heard him, solely on the testimony of the divine oracles. This he did, or it would not have lasted so long.

The question may and should be put to any man of experience whether, in the history of the Church, any reformer, minister or Christian laborer has ever successfully established an experience in others that he had not tasted or felt himself. This I believe to be perfectly impossible. The history of the Church does not present one example of it so far as I know. Philosophy would pronounce it utterly impossible. An unwelcome truth is always received with reluctance in any community. To fully establish it on a large scale requires no ordinary earnestness on the part of its propagators. To lead men to hunger for a state of grace that is unpopular, and to attain which requires the plucking out the right eye, deep humiliation of soul, a self-denial that does not wince at the loss of all things dear to the flesh, is not begotten by cold reasoners on the fitness of things. The successful preacher who moves the multitude to seek for such a grace in the face of such sacrifices must have the Holy Ghost in him, and experimentally feel the power of the salvation he teaches. He cannot succeed without this. No man ever did or ever will. A man must be on fire himself, or others will not feel it. Here alone is to be found the true reason for the non-success of some ministers in all the churches of this and every land. They are dry, not from natural but spiritual causes. Their hearts are not right with God; they are not fully sanctified

by grace. Men will always teach and believe as they feel. Water will not rise above its fountain. Holiness never has been preached successfully by one who did not enjoy the blessing of it himself.

But Mr. Wesley did preach it successfully for forty years together. It was his theme in the pulpit, in the press and in all his extensive correspondence, as his letters abundantly show. Perfect love, holiness as a blessing received subsequently to regeneration, was his daily theme to the last of his life. He did more: he believed that God raised up the Methodists as a people to spread this same scriptural holiness over all lands. Why did he so believe and teach? It was a new truth to him until God gave him to see it. After that he did not, and could not, cease to proclaim it, because it was like a fire within him. Could he have so believed, preached, written, labored and suffered through a long life, amidst evil and good report, without personally knowing in his own soul that what he taught was experimentally true? If he experienced the grace himself, he of course confessed it before all his people, whether he wrote about it or not. He would not have been consistent with himself had he not done so; for he says: "Every one ought to declare what God hath done for his soul; nothing is a stronger incentive to them to seek after the same blessing." If that is true, was Mr. Wesley the man to neglect to use the strongest arguments, the mightiest means, in the promotion of his great theme, the real work of his life?

His preaching in any place always planted a burning desire for full salvation, a hungering for God, even the living God, among most people who heard him. Had his soul not been on fire with his theme by a felt experience, it could not have been so. He could not have urged others to profess its enjoyment and decline to do so himself. They would have replied to his arguments, Why do you not do yourself what you so urge on us? You lay burdens on us you do not bear yourself. Go before us in this higher life and its open profession, and we will follow after you, but cease to urge on us what you do not do yourself. Into such absurdities do ministers and laymen drive Mr. Wesley, who, parrot-like, cry out that he never professed perfect love.

But Mr. Wesley says, as we have before shown, in his letter to Lady Huntingdon, that he preached and urged its attainment on all over whom he had influence immediately after the Lord had revealed it to himself, and not before.

His letter to Dr. Dodd, so confidently referred to by both Mr. Tyerman and Dr. Crane, is not inconsistent with this teaching, and, as I view it, is capable of easy explanation. It was published in the "Evening Post," April 3, 1757, in reply to an attack made on him by Dr. Dodd in the "Christian Magazine." Mr. Wesley says in the letter: "Five or six and thirty years ago I much admired the character of a perfect Christian, drawn by Clemens Alexandrinus. Five or six and twenty years ago a thought came

into my mind of drawing such a character myself, only in a more scriptural manner, and mostly in the very words of Scripture. This I entitled 'The Character of a Methodist.' But that none might imagine that I intended a panegyric upon either myself or my friends, I guarded against this in the very title page, saying, 'Not as though I had already attained, or was already perfect.' To the same effect I speak in the conclusion these are the principles and practice of our sect, these are the marks of a true Methodist (that is, a true Christian). By these alone do those who are in derision so called desire to be distinguished from other men. By these marks do we *labor* to distinguish ourselves from those whose minds or lives are not according to the gospel of Christ."

Upon this, Dr. Dodd says, "A Methodist, according to Mr. Wesley, is one who is perfect, and sinneth not in thought, word or deed." Mr. Wesley replies: "This is not according to Mr. Wesley. I have told all the world I am not perfect; I tell you flat I have not attained the character I draw. Will you pin it upon me in spite of my teeth? I say the Methodists *desire* to be distinguished by these marks." Mr. Tyerman and Dr. Crane adduce this open letter as positive proof that Mr. Wesley never enjoyed or professed perfect love. Being compelled to differ from both these learned and respectable writers, it is meet, right and my bounden duty to show why I believe they are in error.

MR. WESLEY'S EXPERIENCE IN HOLINESS.

1. Mr. Wesley drew the character of a perfect Christian strictly after the New Testament type. He veered not to the right or left to meet the views or allow for the infirmities of even the best. There is a standard for all coins—in pure metal there is no alloy. Whether what you or I have, comes up to the standard is not a question with the assayer; he must not lower the standard to meet that. Nor did Mr. Wesley dare to do this in showing the perfect type of a Christian. Hear him in his description of a perfect believer, in the tract in question: “He is dead to all that is in the world.” “There is not a motion in his heart but is according to God’s will.” “Every thought that arises points to him.” “He cannot lay up treasure upon earth.” “He cannot adorn himself, on any pretence, with gold or costly apparel.” “He cannot utter an unkind word of any one.” “He cannot speak idle words.” All which is in precise accord with the New Testament type of Christian character. No wonder he said: “I have not attained the character I draw.” He and his people, he said, *desired* to be distinguished by these marks; but he had told all the world that neither he nor his people professed to have fully reached this scriptural standard. They were not perfect in this high sense.

A single passage in Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians clearly shows the different degrees of holy love

and experience here recognized by Mr. Wesley. "That ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God." I know not one of all who now profess to have been made perfect in love but can use the language of Mr. Wesley: "Have us excused; we have not attained this state; we are hungering, and desire to be filled with all this fullness of God. We have come to the holy mount, but have not yet reached its summit."

2. It will be seen that Mr. Wesley puts his own experience on a level with that of his people. He claims as much for himself as he does for them. And Dr. Crane, as well as the biographer of Mr. Wesley, admits that six hundred and fifty-two in London alone had professed to have received the blessing of perfect love; and after a full personal examination of every one of them, Mr. Wesley and Thomas Walsh were satisfied that they were not deceived themselves or deceiving others. I may say in passing, that he could not have examined others in the science or experience of a holiness of which he knew nothing himself. It requires a Hebrew scholar to examine and pass a class of students in Hebrew. It seems to me that the single fact of his examining and approving the experience of so many whom he alone had taught in the higher life of per-

fect love establishes the other fact—namely, his own experience in the same grace. At all events, he denies no more in relation to himself in his letter to Dr. Dodd than he does for all the people called Methodists. I wonder that neither his biographer nor Dr. Crane seems to have seen this. He had come as near to the character he drew as had any of his people who confessedly did openly profess it. “A Methodist,” says Dr. Dodd, “according to Mr. Wesley, is perfect, and sinneth not in thought, word or deed.” Mr. Wesley replies: “Have me excused; this is not according to Mr. Wesley.” “But Mr. Wesley says other Methodists have.” “*I say no such thing.* I say we *desire*, we *labor*, to thus distinguish ourselves.” I have been thus particular that all men may see that Mr. Wesley claimed at least as much for himself as for any of his people, and no more. And Dr. Crane and Mr. Tyerman both say that many in his societies professed perfect love, and he believed they were not deceived.

3. Mr. Wesley admits that Mr. Fletcher had reached a much higher experience—had come very much nearer the character he had drawn than himself or any of his people. Of him Mr. Wesley says: “I was intimately acquainted with him for above thirty years; I conversed with him morning, noon and night, without the least reserve, during a journey of many hundred miles, and in all that time I never heard him speak one improper word nor saw him do an improper action. To conclude,

many exemplary men have I known, holy in heart and life, within four score years, but one equal to him I have not known—one so inwardly and outwardly devoted to God. So unblamable a character, in every respect, I have not found either in Europe or America, nor do I expect to find another such on this side of eternity. As it is possible we all may be such as he was, let us endeavor to follow him as he followed Christ."

The testimony of Mrs. Fletcher is even more full and explicit, with which I could fill a hundred pages were it necessary; a word or two will suffice. She says: "I am constrained to declare that I never knew any one walk so closely in the ways of God as he did. He literally preferred the interest of every one to his own. Perfectly loose from all attachment to the world, he shared his all with the poor, who lay so close to his heart that at the approach of death he cried out, 'O my poor! What will become of my poor?'"

He carried his religion far above that of Mr. Wesley or any of his people, as was well known then, and has been ever since admitted by all who have been conversant with the facts in the case. So strong was his faith, and so uninterrupted his communion with God, that they almost made the future present and the unseen visible. But even this lofty experience was not above the picture drawn by Mr. Wesley of a New Testament Christian. It was hardly necessary for that good man, Mr. Wesley,



who lived in an atmosphere of perfect love, to say, "I have not attained the character I draw." I am not perfect in that high sense. We all can see the true state of the case who read the story of his life and labors. Nor did he claim it for any of his people any more than for himself. He saw the attainable heights he or they had not reached, and which Mr. Fletcher had come much nearer to than any he had ever known. But he does not say he did not enjoy perfect love in the degree to which he had led his people to seek for and profess it. He evidently loved God with all his heart, and his neighbor as himself. His whole life and labors are the fruits of such a love, and by these we are taught to form our estimate of what actuates the heart.

In my opinion the following facts are herein established beyond successful contradiction :

1. That Mr. Wesley intended to and did recite his own experience in holiness in his letter to Lady Huntingdon : "God gave me to see, and immediately I declared to all, *we are saved from sin, we are made holy by faith.*"

2. That he never declared more clearly his own justification, his principal profession of it being simply in these words : "My heart was strangely warmed." Little more is said of it in all his writings.

3. He deemed it the duty of all to testify of perfect love who had received it, urged all his people to do so, and God, as he always has and ever will, owned and blessed such recital of personal experi-

ence. After that he could not consistently withhold his own.

4. That his letter to Dr. Dodd does not prove that he did not profess the perfect love or holiness which he preached almost daily, and which six hundred and fifty-two of his members professed to have received in London alone, and which after full examination he approved as genuine. It was the high New Testament type of divine communion which he had taught in his tract, and which neither himself nor his people had reached, and which Mr. Fletcher had come so much nearer to than either he or they had, that he declares he had not attained.

## CHAPTER VII.

### *TESTIMONY OF EXPERIENCE.—Continued.*

“Ye are the light of the world.”

#### EXPERIENCE OF THE FATHERS.

AS there may be many in our Church, and indeed in all Churches, who may not be familiar with the published experiences of the fathers on the higher life of perfect love, I will recite a few of them. This has always been deemed a foundation doctrine of our system. Those who teach that pardon and purity are the same thing, and secured at the same time, strike at a vital point in Methodism—unwittingly, I hope—if not at Christianity itself; for if Christ came to save at all, it was to open upon each mind and heart the light it was able to bear at first, and afterward to “lead into all truth and purity,” fully “destroying the works of the devil” in the soul. The mother wisely hides the strong light from the infant’s eyes, as it could not bear it till more mature. And Christ said he had much more light to give his disciples, “but they were not yet able to bear it.” An awakened penitent seeks pardon and peace, and receives what he craves by faith in the promises. He sees nothing beyond this at

that time. Light on the holiness of God and his law comes afterward, and then he hungers for perfect conformity to all the divine will. The history of the progress of religion in the soul is uniform in all the ages. How easy it is for a man to exhibit his own defects just here !

Whenever conscious, felt communion with God in holiness and perfect love is rejected as false, fanatical and unscriptural, then the witness of the Spirit to our adoption and sonship is also deemed a delusion. Both experiences are usually rejected if either one is. It always has been so as far as my experience has gone. And then all religion is reduced to the mere outward service of the lip and bended knee, the book of forms and orthodox opinions. Thus has religion been driven out of the world for ages by its professed friends ; but God raised up the Wesleys to spread holy love, true scriptural heart purity and Christian joy over the world. We have followed their faith, and have preached both the witness of the Spirit to our pardon and adoption and the power of Christ to cleanse from all sin. Forty or more years since, my circuit included Brother Crane's present district and very much more contiguous territory. We had to contend there more ardently for the knowledge of pardon and forgiveness of sins as the privilege of believers than we do now among cold professors for the higher life of holiness. The witness of the Spirit was generally condemned as the fanaticism of ignorant and uneducated enthusiasts.

Religion then and there was accepted as true and reliable that consisted in hoping in and fearing God; all beyond this was deemed false and deceptive.

Methodists have had to fight for every inch of ground in spiritual life and joyous worship from the time they entered the north-eastern portion of New Jersey until almost the entire population think as we do. We have never deemed the entrance upon a new spiritual life a finality or ripeness in Christian grace and deep experience. A higher life of holiness and perfect love has been insisted on in all our history. All the sermons, flights of fancy and mischievous books written by such as have fallen into error on the deep things of God, can never change either Methodist opinion or the facts of universal experience. The doctrine that perfect holiness is secured in regeneration too flatly contradicts what regenerate men know to be true within themselves, to be acceptable to good men in any denomination. I most pity Methodist ministers who fall into this error. I pity them in trying to keep up their love-feasts and class-meetings in the old way. Such views are utterly incompatible with the success of a pastor among our people.

But the doctrine of Christian perfection is matter of personal experience, and always subsequent to justification. Mr. Wesley says: "Experience is sufficient to confirm a doctrine which is grounded on Scripture." In the list which we subjoin please notice several things: 1. Every one testifying was

consciously a Christian believer. 2. Each one was troubled with impulses from within to do wrong; these were arrested by the aid of grace before they eventuated in guilt. 3. Each one from these discoveries sought for complete deliverance, and by a perfect faith was lifted up and kept upon a plane above these embarrassments—on a plane where faith no longer grew dim, where such struggles never found place again, and where love flowed ever afterward in a steady, sweet and increasing current.

BISHOP ASBURY,

one of the number whom Brother Crane declares never professed holiness, says in his journal: "Some time after I had obtained a clear witness of my acceptance with God, the Lord showed me the evils of my heart. My heart and mouth are open, only I am still sensible of my deep insufficiency, and that mostly in regard to holiness. It is true God has given me some gifts, but what are they to holiness? It is for holiness my spirit mourns. I want to walk constantly before God without reproof. . . . Felt much power while preaching on perfect love. The more I speak on this subject, the more my soul is filled and drawn out in love. This doctrine has a great tendency to prevent people from settling on their lees. . . . My soul has had complete victory over all sin, and been blessed with peaceable and calm fellowship with the Father and the Son. I wanted to be holy as He that called me is holy. My

spirit mourns and hungers and thirsts after entire devotion." Having once lost the blessing, he says: "Last night the Lord re-sanctified my soul. . . . I am divinely impressed to preach sanctification in every sermon."

Most of the old preachers followed Mr. Wesley's counsel in this as well as Mr. Asbury.

BISHOP WHATCOAT.

Describing his own conversion, he says: "I was filled with unspeakable peace and joy in believing; my faith and love grew stronger. I soon found that though I was justified freely, yet I was not wholly sanctified. This brought me into a deep concern. Evils I still found in my heart. After many sharp and painful conflicts, and many gracious visitations also, on the 28th of March, 1761, my soul was drawn out and engaged in a manner it never was before. Suddenly I was stripped of all but love, and in this happy state, rejoicing evermore, and in everything giving thanks, I continued for some years, wanting nothing for soul or body more than I received from day to day."

REV. FREEBORN GARRETTSON.

In the life of this excellent man, one of the early fathers of Methodism in this country, written by Dr. Bangs, it is said that, "by the experience of an excellent lady, he learned that there was such a thing to attain in this life as perfect love," and he says, "I

knew I was not in possession of it. I saw a beauty in the doctrine, and preached it, but it was at a distance." When on Roanoke Circuit, in North Carolina, he writes: "Respecting Christian perfection, I believed such a thing was attainable in this life. I therefore, both in public and in private, contended for it, and had often felt the need of it in my own soul, but I never had such a view of it in my life as while on this circuit. The Lord, in a very powerful and sudden manner, gave me to see and feel the need of this blessed work. Every heart corruption was discovered to me by the blessed Spirit at the house of that dear afflicted mother in Israel, Mrs. Y. This discovery was made to me while I was alone in the preachers' room. I expected in a few moments to be in eternity, and the cry of my heart was, 'Lord, save me from inbred sin!' The purity of God, heaven and the law, with the impurity of my heart, were so disclosed to my view that I was humbled in the very dust, and expected never to enter into the kingdom of heaven without a greater likeness to my blessed Lord. For more than a week an earnest struggle continued in my heart for all the mind which was in Christ. My appointments were made, or I am apprehensive I should have declined preaching so pure a gospel until the heart corruptions which I felt were washed away. Yet I did not let go my hold of the dear Redeemer, the witness of my justification.

"One day I went to my appointment, and while the people were gathering I withdrew about a quar-



ter of a mile from the house and wrestled with the Lord in prayer. I thought I could not meet the congregation unless I was delivered from my inbred sins. However, after the people had waited about an hour, I went to the house; but my struggle seemed to be at its height. I thought I would pray with the people and dismiss them. After prayer my Lord gave me this text: 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.' Never had I such freedom before that time to describe 1st, the impurity of the heart, 2nd, how it is to be purified, and 3d, the blessing resulting therefrom—'they shall see God.' While I was speaking of the travail of a soul for purity all my distress vanished, and I felt a little heaven on earth. I know that the Lord deepened his work, but I did not claim the witness of perfect love; yet my soul was happy from day to day. From this time I began to preach the doctrine of Christian perfection more than ever; the plan seemed as clear to me as the noonday sun. Many were convinced of the need of perfect love, and some were brought into possession of it."

The following note I find at the foot of the page, I suppose by the biographer, Dr. Bangs: "What is this perfection? It is not the perfection of God or angels, nor the perfection of Adam in paradise, but it is Christian perfection. It consists in the extirpation of all sin, in having the powers and affections of the heart purified and the whole soul filled with divine love. 2nd. How is this blessing to be at-

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tained? As we are justified by faith, so are we sanctified by faith. 1st. We are convinced of the need of it. 2nd. In general, there is a sweet distress, but no condemnation or guilt. 3d. We must by faith receive the promises. Repentance disclaims all help of man. Faith lays claim to all the help in Christ. Repentance says: 'I can do nothing.' Faith says: 'Through Christ Jesus strengthening me, I can do all things.'"

It will be noticed that Mr. Garrettson failed to claim the witness of perfect love during the sermon on Matt. v. 8, although he felt great relief to his thirsting spirit. But perhaps I can supply the missing link in the chain of evidence to his profession of entire sanctification and the full witness of it.

At a camp meeting held at Haverstraw, New York, on the circuit which I was then traveling, in 1825, Mr. Garrettson was at the meeting a day or two, when I heard him recite the following facts: "At a camp-meeting in the South of which Bishop Asbury had the charge, he came up to me after the morning service, and putting his hand on my shoulder said: 'Brother Garrettson, I want you to preach at three o'clock to-day on the subject of Christian holiness.' 'Oh, bishop,' said I, 'don't request such a thing. I have not yet received the witness of the grace of perfect love, and no man is fit to preach what by experience he has not received the witness of in himself.' But the bishop was inflexible, and said: 'Preach it until you receive the

assurance in your own soul.' For an hour or two," continued Brother Garrettson, "I went alone into the woods, and on my knees struggled in earnest prayer for divine help. They were hours of deep anguish of soul; but at last I found a text, and at the hour of service was in my place on the stand, and commenced the worship in the usual way. I first tried to show the necessity of this grace to all men, and while dwelling on this point I saw more clearly than ever before my own need of a clean heart. My soul broke out in strong desire for perfect love. I next tried to show the nature of the work itself, and how it acted on and controlled the whole heart and life. While describing this I received the gracious blessing myself, and told all the people of the spiritual change that had come over me during the delivery of the sermon. My third point was its personal benefits; and I assure you I recited these readily and from a feeling heart. I testified in burning words what I then felt, and the audience were greatly moved, as they could clearly see how deeply I was affected myself."

The old gentleman seemed full of joy while relating these facts, and urged all, but more especially the ministers present, never to allow themselves an hour's rest until they realized that the blood of Christ had cleansed them from all sin.

How changed are the circumstances of the Church now! The fathers then urged all their junior brethren in the ministry to keep at the Master's feet, to

seek with all the power of persevering prayer for the gift of the Holy Ghost to fully equip them for their great work of saving souls. Now leading officials, editors and presiding elders seem to doubt as to the sincerity of most of those who are struggling for a higher religious experience, and seem most to admire the course of such as say little or nothing about holiness. But a change will come; the work is God's, not ours, and therefore we must leave all to him, "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Duty is ours; results belong to God, whose we are, and whom we try to serve. Let no one be alarmed at opposing views.

REV. DR. OLIN,

president of Wesleyan University, said to a friend in a letter: "I had difficulties respecting our own theoretical views of the doctrine of perfect love. I even joined the conference with exceptions to it, and stated my objections before the whole body, but I was admitted. Years, however, passed without any modification of my opinions. But it pleased God to lead me into the truth. My health failed; my official employment had to be abandoned. I lost my children, my wife died, and I was wandering over the world alone, with scarcely anything remaining but God. I lost my hold on all things else, and, as it were, became lost myself in God. My affections centred in him; my will became absorbed in his. I sank, as it were, into the blessedness of perfect love,

and found in my own consciousness the reality of the doctrine which I had theoretically doubted."

It may be that God will lead other doubters by similar providences into all truth, and yet make them able exponents of the doctrine of holiness. Let us hope and pray for this.

BISHOP JANES.

In a sermon preached at a camp-meeting near Morristown, New Jersey, August 18, 1867, the bishop says, "Oh, the purifying of the heart, the taking away all our depravity, this regulating our affections, purifying our motives and making holy our aspirations! Oh what a change is this! and God is faithful to do it. We have defined the cleansing from all unrighteousness to be the renewing of our souls by the Holy Ghost. The soul is restored—restored to the image and nature of God; he is cleansed from all sin.

"I ask my brethren who have some misgivings on this question about this instantaneous sanctification, What are you going to do with all the experience of the Church on this subject? It has been one of our exultant doctrines that religion was experimental, that religion was conscious. Well, now, what shall we do, when Fletcher and Benson, and Bramwell and David Stoner, and Drs. Fisk and Olin and Bangs, and tens of thousands of others, have testified, both in life and death, that they are conscious of the hour and place when God by the Holy Ghost cleansed

them from all unrighteousness? What are you going to do with this testimony? You must believe it, or you must doubt the witness of the Spirit in the case of justification. I desire most intensely that the Church, that the children of God, that believers, should receive the fulfillment of the promise of the text in the plenitude of the divine blessing. Oh, be not satisfied, but continue seeking until you find cleansing from all unrighteousness, until there is no guilty stain, no unholy affection, no sinful desire, no wrong motive, lurking in your spirit, but all be cleansed away by the power of the Holy Ghost."

The bishop recited his own experience at the Union camp-meeting at Round Lake in 1874, as follows: "Now, we are not what we ought to be in view of our doctrines and religious privileges—not what I think we shall be. I trust we shall become more spiritual, shall have more life and faith and power and progress. But let us give God praise for what he has done for us, and look to him for a more abundant effusion of his grace both upon his ministers and people. I want to say, also, that I am saved from sin through Christ, that I have an increasing nearness to God, and more intimate fellowship with him, a great sense of his gracious presence with me by day and by night; and if I have a title to anything, it is to heaven; if I have a hold on anything, it is on heaven. I know my probation is drawing to its close; I have had great opportunities to serve my Lord and Master, and have a very sol-

emn account to render. I appreciate it more and more ; and yet, through God's great mercy in Jesus Christ, I meet it without fear, for I believe that all my imperfections of service and devotion are forgiven for Christ's sake, and that he is the Lord my righteousness, and that through his mercy I shall give up my account with joy and enter into the presence and beatitude of God, blessed be his name !"

Perhaps it will make the matter more clear for me to transcribe from Mr. Wesley his own statement of the facts before referred to : " I desired all those in London who made the same profession (of holiness) to come to me all together at the foundry that I might be thoroughly satisfied. When we met, first one of us and then the other asked them the most searching questions we could devise. They answered every one without hesitation and with the utmost simplicity, so that we were fully persuaded they did not deceive themselves.

" During the next four or five years the number of those who professed holiness multiplied exceedingly, not only in London and Bristol, but in various parts of Ireland as well as England. Not trusting to the testimony of others, I carefully examined most of these myself, and in London alone I found six hundred and fifty-two members of our society who were *exceedingly clear in their experience*, and of whose testimony I could see no reason to doubt. I believe no year has passed since that time wherein God has not wrought the same work in many others. And

every one of these, after the most careful inquiry, I have not found one exception, either in Great Britain or Ireland, but has declared that this deliverance from sin was instantaneous, that the change was wrought in a moment."

Drop the six hundred and bring the fifty-two before any court to bear testimony to any truth of which they were personally cognizant, and it would settle any question of fact before any court or jury. Similar facts of experience have been occurring for a century, and are still multiplying more than ever; carping, cold objectors cannot stop the blessed work. Let the friends of Jesus take courage, work and trust; the work is God's, not theirs; all results are with him. Brother Crane writes what he calls "a sad chapter;" and were we to believe what he says, we should think the work of holiness came to a standstill after the defection of Maxfield and Bell. But Mr. Wesley was full of good cheer: "No year has passed since that time wherein God hath not wrought the same blessing in many others." Like the servant of Elisha, my good brother Crane is scared, and ready to cry out, "My Master, what shall we do?" Our office now is to pray, "Lord, open his eyes," that he may see that there are more for us than against us.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### *TESTIMONY OF EXPERIENCE.—Continued.*

“They washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”

#### THE FATHERS OF THE CHURCH.

##### BISHOP ENOCH GEORGE

**D**IED in Staunton, Va., August 25, 1828, of a violent attack of dysentery, at the house of Philip Hopkins. He wrote but little during life, his opportunities of education having been limited, like most Methodist ministers of his day. What raised him to so high a position in the Church was his deep piety, fervency of spirit and very effective public ministry. Like Barnabas, “he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith.” His theme was holiness in the pulpit and out of it, because he enjoyed it himself. It burned in his soul like a fire that was unquenchable. All who heard him knew and felt that he held steady communion with God. To the praise of men and the honors of the world he appeared to be as dead as was the sainted Fletcher. In the midst of his sermon I have often seen him stop, and lifting his eyes toward heaven cry out in a plaintive tone, “O Thou who lightest the lamps of glory, save the

Methodist Church from freezing up!" An "amens" would follow it all over the congregation in the old Methodist style. The sympathy and feeling would be so intense that the house seemed filled with praise. Those were the good old days of Methodism, dear to recollection still with a few who yet remain, no more seen among us now, except occasionally at camp-meetings. But they are a luxury to the holy soul still; and I somehow think they will yet come back again to the Church, and our children will a few years hence enjoy them as did the fathers.

Bishop George used the word glory in a manner and with a tone a little different from all others. I heard an old brother, son of a Methodist preacher, in a meeting for the promotion of holiness last week, refer to the manner in which Bishop George used the word glory. It went through me like fire as it brought up fresh to recollection the days of former years. The bishop heard a member of the conference preach one evening, and on leaving the church said to him: "You Northern men are always for system, but we Southern men love to wet the eyes of our congregations." Although I have heard him many times, I never knew him to preach one dry sermon. He seemed always filled with the Holy Ghost, and had power from on high.

And how did he die? His theme on the bed of death as in life was, "Glory, glory!" His physician coming in, he said: "I shall soon be in glory." To Brother Morrison, who stood near him, he said:

"Who are these? Are they not all ministering spirits?" and exclaimed, "My dear departed wife has been with me, and I shall soon be with her in glory." On Friday morning, when Brother Morrison entered the room, he raised his arms and embraced him and Bros. Berkeley and Hopkins in turn, and said: "Brethren, rejoice with me; I am going to glory." This was repeated many times during the day. He said: "I am going to glory—that is enough." Toward the close of the day he said, clapping his hands: "Shout glory to God! The best of all is the Lord is with us." Being asked if he had any temporal business unsettled, he replied: "Nothing of any magnitude;" and added, as though he had bid adieu to all earthly concerns, "I am going to glory. I have been for many years trying to lead others to glory, and now thither I am going. 'For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.' Jesus is sweet." \*

\* Rev. L. R. Dunn having recently discovered a couple of letters from Bishop George and published them in the "Advocate of Holiness," I take pleasure in inserting them here. The first was written to a presiding elder in the Genesee Conference, and the latter to Rev. Daniel Ostrander, of the New York Conference. They serve to show how the former generation of Methodists were trained.

"MY DEAR BROTHER: This may inform you that under the superintending care of a gracious Providence I have returned safely, and am now in Philadelphia, on my way to the South Carolina Conference. I have been writing to the presiding elders in the New England, New York and Genesee Conferences on one particular subject—that is, to request them as far as possible to introduce the doctrine, the spirit and practice of holiness among their preachers,

BISHOP M'KENDREE,

like his colleague Bishop George, wrote but little, and therefore we have not the materials from which to gather much concerning his daily trials or spirit-

local and traveling, that the heavenly influence may spread its energies among the membership; for there can be little doubt but that the membership of our Church will unite with us in pursuing and realizing this precious pearl when they find us sincere in doctrine and example. I have found by experience as a presiding elder that this may be done with the most ease and success by introducing it into the Quarterly Conferences, and there obtaining the promise of all the official characters to commence the pursuit of it themselves by prayer and fasting for this particular blessing, and then invite and lead their different charges into the possession of this special and scriptural qualification for heaven. Permit me to assign one or two reasons for this request. And, first, we ought to do so for the sake of consistency. We read that the Methodists were raised up to be a holy people. The doctrine we preach and the discipline we administer call upon us to be a holy people; and while our practice is at war with our doctrine and discipline we shall always appear to disadvantage to men of reason and intelligence. But my final and conclusive reason is this—that we may go on ourselves, and lead our people in a safe and pleasant way to heaven, and also that we may see our fields of labor blooming with beauty, prosperity and glory; for we shall find a holy ministry, and a holy people will in the general be successful in gathering souls to Christ. I hope you will pray for your sincere friend in the kingdom and patience of Jesus,

ENOCH GEORGE."

"Let us keep steady to our cardinal point, pleading for and promoting holiness of heart and life. I am pleased to find that my brethren in the ministry and membership in your conference are making such united efforts in favor of holiness. Go on, my brethren, in the name of Him who said, 'Be ye holy, for I am holy,' and you shall prosper. I remain your affectionate friend and brother in Christ,

ENOCH GEORGE."

ual victories; but his whole life was devoted to God and his Church, in the most extensive travels and unceasing toils, down to advanced age, for the trifling sum of one hundred dollars a year; and as his wants were therewith met, he was perfectly content, and was never heard to ask for more. His appearance and manner in conference and in private life were the most apostolic of any of his colleagues. He was in the habit of reminding the preachers in all his speeches "that this life for us all was one of sacrifice for the benefit of others. We must not look to be rewarded in this world." All his teaching led to self-denial and holiness.

Dr. T. F. Sargent, with whom he mostly lodged when in Philadelphia, and who knew him well, said to me that he was one of the most devoted and sweetest spirited of men. He knew him well for many years, and deemed him the most perfect model of a Christian bishop of his day. I knew him and was ordained to the office of elder by the imposition of his hands, but not having heard him recite his religious experience or read it anywhere cannot say more concerning it than I have, except that he was always esteemed one of the most self-denying and holy men.

BISHOP ROBERTS

is another of whose religious experience I personally know but little. But I do know that when he visited conference he was always in a very happy, joyful state of mind. Few men ever saw him sad or

gloomy. My first appointment in this city was at St. George's charge, or rather circuit, with four churches to be supplied by four ministers. My first appointment to preach was at Salem church, then in Thirteenth street, on Sabbath afternoon. The house, of course, was full to hear the new minister, and it is said most of the official members of the circuit were there ; and to add to my embarrassment, among them sat Bishop Roberts. Being young and not accustomed to city congregations, the trial to me was considerable—a test of courage not at all desirable. I used all the power of persuasion in my possession to induce the bishop to take my place and preach to the people, but to no purpose. The bishop was kind, but on this point inexorable. He however agreed to go into the pulpit, pray for and do me all the service he could. He was alive, full of praise and abounded with hearty amens at intervals all the time I was preaching, and closed the service for me in a perfect burst of praise and Christian joyfulness. He was deemed one of the most devout and holy of men.

BISHOP EMORY,

one of the later bishops, entered on his life-work as an itinerant Methodist minister in 1810. "March 10, 1812. To-day, while meeting class and pressing the members to look for that 'perfect love which casteth out fear,' the Lord renewed my own witness of it, after having been some time in doubt about it.

This is the third time I have had the witness given. I believe not declaring it and want of watchfulness were the chief causes of my being brought into doubts before. May I be wise and more faithful hereafter!"—"Life of Bishop Emory."

He was an able defender of Methodism, both in its doctrines and institutions. He was one of our best-educated men, and sacrificed much of earthly prospect and promise in becoming a humble Methodist preacher on the large circuits of that period, with much labor, rough fare and poor pay. He was one of the most able and devotedly pious men. His life was brief, but very successful.

#### BISHOP WAUGH

is too near our day and too well known by the present generation to need many remarks from me here. We all know that it was his constant effort to raise and keep up the tone of deep piety among the younger preachers. It almost made him unhappy when he saw any tendency to worldliness and consequent loss of the spirit of deep devotion among the preachers. He also believed, and very correctly too, that if holy love and a warm devotion of spirit to Christ and his cause was ever lost among the ministers, the piety of the people would also deteriorate in like proportion. He experienced what he steadily preached during all his late years—a holy and deep communion with God.

BISHOP PECK

has been a professor of the higher life of holiness for very many years, as is well known to his friends, and has written a fine work on the subject; and I suppose he is still standing steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine on the solid rock. But as he is living, and able to tell the world what he feels and enjoys, there is the less necessity of my saying any more here. It is hoped that he will soon say to the world and the Church of which he has recently been made an overseer what his views and enjoyments are in this precious grace of perfect love for the benefit of younger officials in the Church.

REV. LAWRENCE M'COMBS,

one of the fathers, and the steady friend and occasional presiding elder of the writer, was a most holy man. There have been few men of firmer faith, more steady trust in God, or more quiet and uncomplaining in the deepest domestic suffering. His children were stricken down until none were left, and then the companion of his early and more advanced life was laid away in the grave, yet not a word of complaint escaped his lips. When I attempted to condole with him in his great bereavement, his calm reply was, "Yes, but we must take things as they come." He was a mighty man of God in manhood's prime—a model for young ministers; and after he was rendered helpless by paralysis, on visiting him I found



him the same trusting, cheerful, hopeful, happy believer in Christ's power to save from all sin.

REV. JOSEPH RUSLING,

one of our most efficient ministers in the Philadelphia Conference for many years, experienced the grace of perfect love in a meeting at St. George's church in this city while in the prime of life. He was sitting in the chancel when the Holy Ghost came upon him and actually physically disabled him for the space of half an hour or more. He was perfectly silent both before and for some time after receiving the power from on high. He frequently related the circumstance to me, and told me how it opened his mind to understand the Scriptures as never before, fulfilling the Saviour's promise—"He shall lead you into all truth." There is nothing, perhaps, which more fully marks this precious state of grace than its clearing up of the meaning and personally applying the words of divine revelation to the soul. This it did for him in such a way as to make it a special matter of remark to his friends in ordinary conversation.

REV. JOSEPH LYBRAND.

Oh what a man of God! What a sublime preacher was that holy leader of the faithful in the Church of Christ! His sermons were so perfect and correctly delivered that good judges thought he wrote and committed them to memory, and then recited them to the congregations, deeming it quite impossible

for any man to utter extemporaneously an hour's discourse so perfect in all respects. But they were mistaken. He spoke of what he knew, of course, and had deeply meditated before God, but without knowing with what words he was about to clothe his burning thoughts. He was born an orator; and being wholly sanctified by grace, he most always awakened up a profound feeling in his congregations. When he traveled on a district in New Jersey and resided at New Brunswick, he was laid on his bed for nearly three months by an attack of inflammatory rheumatism, in which his sufferings were intense. He got out, however, in time to attend the conference at Philadelphia in April, and what he said there in relation to his sufferings melted us all into tears of deep sympathy. But when he said, "I would willingly pass through just such another scene of suffering, commencing to-morrow, if it were the will of God," it fairly broke us down with emotion. His will was all lost in the will of God. He seemed to have no choice of his own. Holiness was his constant theme. On coming on a camp-ground and being invited to preach, he would ask, "Has any one preached on holiness since the meeting commenced?" And if answered in the negative, he would say it must be done, and then we enjoyed the privilege of hearing a beautiful, tender description of divine provision and of human privilege. His name was like ointment poured forth in all places where he preached the word of life. He usually thinned all the other

churches and crowded his own ; and it was his divine baptism of love and holy fire that drew the people more than his natural eloquence.

I will close these recitals of the experience of the fathers of our Church by saying to my junior brethren in the ministry of reconciliation, If you want to draw the people and fill your churches, or to make your work a pleasure instead of a burden, or to ensure the divine blessing on all your work in the pulpit and out of it, in the families of your people, and have your own soul filled with joyous hope, seek what Christ promised his disciples—the gift of the Holy Ghost.

## CHAPTER IX.

### *TESTIMONY OF EXPERIENCE IN OTHER COMMUNIONS.*

“Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.”

THIS higher life of holy love in which the truly consecrated live, “rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks,” etc., is not peculiar to any one denomination; it belongs to all who choose to rise to their gospel privilege in Christ. And before I turn to other matters it may be well to record a few of the joyous testimonies of those who, though they have used a different language, were nevertheless “partakers of like precious faith.”

REV. ROBERT HALL,

the most distinguished Baptist minister of his day, had witnessed a good profession for many years as a pastor prior to the death of his father. This, together with a protracted and somewhat alarming personal affliction, produced a deep and abiding change in the tone of his piety as well as in his preaching. After this his pulpit ministration was so warm and practical that it was offensive to some of his worldly hearers. At the close of a service one of his hearers

entered the vestry and said, "Mr. Hall, this preaching will not do for us; it will only suit a congregation of old women." "Do you mean my sermon or the doctrine?" "Your doctrine, sir." "Why is it that the doctrine is fit only for old women?" "Because it may suit the musings of old people tottering upon the brink of the grave, and who are eagerly seeking comfort." "Thank you, sir, for your concession. If it be true, it is important for every age." But men of God who personally feel the truth and power of what they teach cannot cease to declare it, whether men will hear or not. So the cold-hearted objector, with three or four others, left Mr. Hall's congregation.

His consecration to God was most perfect. I here recite a part of it: "I disclaim all right to myself from henceforth, to my soul, my body, my time, my health, my reputation, my talents, or anything that belongs to me. I confess myself to be the property of the glorious Redeemer. I dedicate myself to him, to serve, love and trust him as my life and my salvation to my life's end. I call thee to witness, O God, the truth and reality of this surrender of all I have and all I am to thee, and earnestly implore the influence of thy Spirit to enable me to stand steadfast in this covenant, as well as an interest in the blood of thy Son, that I may be forgiven in those instances—alas that such an idea may be possible!—in which I may in any degree swerve from it."

After reading this no one will deem it a matter of

surprise that his ministry should be so successful or his death so full of praise. When nearing death, he said: "I have not one anxious thought either for life or death. What I dread most are dark days. But I have had none."

EDWARD PAYSON

had been a Congregational minister of the most devout, laborious and spiritual kind for many years, and very much beloved by his people. Neither himself, nor any other who knew him, had the least doubt of his piety or sense of acceptance with God during most of his active ministry. But after affliction had fully given him to see the little value of earthly things, like Dr. Olin he sunk into God as never before. Then the work of grace was so perfected as to almost open the world of glory to his surprised vision.

He said: "God deals strangely with his creatures to promote their happiness. Who would have thought that I must be reduced to this state, helpless and crippled, to experience the highest enjoyment? You ought to feel happy—all ought to feel happy who come here, for they are within a few steps of heaven."

To a clergyman: "Oh, if ministers only saw the inconceivable glory that is before them, and the preciousness of Christ, they would not be able to refrain from going about leaping and clapping their hands for joy!

“When I used to read Bunyan’s description of the land of Beulah, where the sun shines and the birds sing day and night, I used to doubt whether there was such a place; but now my own experience has convinced me of it, and it infinitely transcends all my previous conceptions.

“I think the happiness I enjoy is similar to that enjoyed by glorified spirits before the resurrection.”

In a letter to his sister he says: “Were I to adopt the figurative language of Bunyan, I might date this letter from the land of Beulah, of which I have been for some weeks a happy inhabitant. The celestial city is full in my view. Its glories beam upon me, its odors are wafted to me, its sounds strike upon my ears, and its spirit is breathed into my heart. I seem to float like an insect in the beams of the sun, exulting yet almost trembling, while I gaze on this excessive brightness, and wondering with unutterable wonder why God should deign thus to shine upon a sinful worm. Oh, my sister, my sister! could you but know what awaits the Christian, could you only know so much as I know, you could not refrain from rejoicing, and even leaping for joy!”

PRESIDENT EDWARDS

gives us the reason for that divine love for which he was afterward so distinguished. One day, when walking for meditation and prayer, I had a view, that for me was extraordinary, of the glory of the Son of God as Mediator between God and man, and his

wonderful, great, full and pure grace and love and meek and gentle condescension. This grace, that appeared so calm and sweet, appeared also great above the heavens; the person of Christ appeared also ineffably excellent with an excellency great enough to swallow up all thought and conception, which continued, as near as I can judge, about an hour, which kept me the greater part of the time in a flood of tears, weeping aloud. I had an ardency of soul to be—what I know not otherwise how to express—emptied and annihilated, to lie in the dust and to be filled with Christ alone, to love him with a holy and pure love, to trust in him, to live upon him and to be perfectly sanctified and made pure with a divine and heavenly purity.”

This to many may seem strange and to some fanatical, but not to such as have wrestled with the angel of the covenant like Jacob, and have come away from the place of full consecration prevailing Israelites. As President Mahan says, “When we have received the Holy Ghost after we have believed,” we comprehend what the Saviour meant when he said, “And this is life eternal, that we might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent;” what God means when he says, “I will dwell in them and walk in them.” You have read, reader, of the communion of the Holy Ghost. Here it is: “Christ in you the hope of glory, we will come to him and make our abode with him, fellowship with the Father and



with his Son, Jesus Christ. The mission of the Spirit is to bring the soul into direct and immediate intercommunion and fellowship with God; to be directly conscious of him as an immediate personal presence, encircling us with his own infinity of love, showing us his glory, his deep sympathy with all our joys and sorrows, cares and interests; to be conscious when we pray that we are speaking to God, 'face to face, as a man speaketh to his friend,' and that his ear is bent tenderly toward us in all our confessions, giving of thanks and petitions, and teaches us the divine lesson of deep content in every allotment of Providence."

A sense of pardon of sin, though a great grace, does not do this for any believers, but the gift of the Holy Ghost can and does do all this. Christians are not straitened in privilege, but in their own faith and full consecration. The faith of all the truly devoted in all denominations is now looking for the Church to rise to such privileges and divine communion. The glory of Christ's kingdom begins to dawn already on the Church. The prospect even now gives a luxurious faith to all who are waiting for the fulfillment of the promise, "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

Every man in all the ages on whom God has laid important and difficult duties has been divinely fitted for his work by special illumination. It was so with Elijah, and his successor craved as his only request

that a double portion of that divine gift might rest upon him also to fit him to occupy his place. There can be no doubt that Luther received more than pardon and regeneration when he suddenly heard in his inmost soul, like a voice of thunder, "The just shall live by faith." This brought him to his feet in more than a physical sense. He then became not only a new man, but he says: "From that hour I saw the precious and Holy Scriptures with new eyes"—almost the same language used by Rev. Mr. Rusling, before referred to, after the Holy Ghost came upon him in his entire cleansing. And the remarkable courage and perfect fearlessness which characterized his entire after career show that he received a portion of the same "power from on high" which distinguished the disciples of our Lord after the day of Pentecost. Perfect love alone is capable of casting out all fear, for "he that feareth is not made perfect in love."

Nor can any one read the story of the heroic John Knox without being compelled to admit that similar divine power rested on him, enabling him to be the daring, fearless man he was in that gloomy period. The Scottish queen and all her nobles trembled before him, and could scarcely look him in the face. Such heroism is not natural, but divinely conferred to meet the emergency. God fits his workmen for the special department of labor to which he calls them. "Burning and shining lights" were occasionally seen all through the Dark Ages as well as since

the Reformation. He does not leave himself without witnesses of his power to "save unto the uttermost" in any age of the Church, nor will he to the end of the world. Great men and heroes are immortalized by monuments of marble, but Christ's memory is kept up by living epistles, "read and known of all men." Holy men are his letters to churches, to all men and all nations. Christ's mind is written to every shop, or place of trade, where a man is employed who carries the Saviour with him; and a minister without Christ within cannot truly witness for him, though ever so learned or eloquent.

MR. CARPENTER.

I remember a Mr. Carpenter, a layman in the Presbyterian Church in Newark, N. J., who did wonders for God and his cause during the last ten years of his life. He was a poor man of quite limited education as well as influence in society—not distinguished by any remarkable trait of character from any others who attended the same place of worship. Without apparent cause, he became impressed with a conscious want of something, he perhaps hardly knew what—had no settled confidence in God that yielded him a satisfactory comfort. Being dissatisfied with himself, and having no assured hope, he resolved on a closer walk with God, and earnestly set his heart on a more satisfying religious condition. All his reading, conversation and devotion was turned in that direction. The intensity of desire, of course,

increased steadily until his whole soul "cried out for the living God." His consecration of body, soul, time and talents, with all his earthly interests, at last became perfect and lacked nothing. Then, as in all such cases, the Spirit came upon him fully, and then commenced his labor for Christ, whom he supremely loved. To the day of his death he staggered not at the promises of God, but "counted all things but loss for Christ," and devoted all his energies to doing good. His power both with God and men soon attracted the attention of those who best knew him, and they promised to meet all his own wants as well as those of his family, and told him to devote all his time to the work of doing good.

He came up through Morris county in 1828, and had appointments made to speak in different neighborhoods in the Presbyterian churches. Large and deeply interested crowds usually came together on week-day afternoons to hear him recite the dealings of God with his own heart and soul. He loved to tell the story in the ears of all men of what God had done for him and what he would do for them if they surrendered their all into his hands. A man must be fully the Lord's before he has a right to expect the fulfillment of his promises to him and in him. I happened to be out of town, attending a funeral, I think, the afternoon he came to Morristown and spoke in the Presbyterian church. This I exceedingly regretted. He declined to occupy the pulpit, but stood in front of it, and spoke for nearly an hour, with mar-

velous effect on all who heard him. I inquired of Rev. Albert Barnes, then pastor of the church there, what was the secret of his great power, as I had heard that the people were deeply impressed and there were but few dry eyes in the congregation. His reply was, "There is a mystery about the man most remarkable. Every word he said seemed to take hold of the hearts and souls of the people from the first sentence to the last that he uttered." It consisted principally in his own personal experience, together with the privilege of all to receive the precious grace and have steady communion with Christ. To an intimate friend just before his death he stated that for the last ten years he had walked continuously in the cloudless light of the divine countenance, that the doctrine of entire sanctification was true, that he had been in that happy condition for some years, and that this doctrine would ere long become a leading theme in all the churches. His dying prediction is now being fulfilled on a wide scale both in Europe and America.

MADE PERFECT THROUGH SUFFERING.

In the time of a general falling away from the true religion in Israel because it was persecuted, and therefore unpopular, God "reserved to himself seven thousand" among that people who were made of a sterner material, and did not bow the knee to Baal. They were wholly unknown even to the prophet Elijah, as well as to most other men among whom

they had lived. But God knew them as his witnesses, and awaited the proper time to bring them to the front to aid in carrying on his work. With many leading minds in all the Churches now deep piety, holy communion with God and a steady life of faith are almost forgotten. But they are good, well-intentioned men, seeking the good of the Church, and trying to widen its popular influence by what they deem the best means within their reach. Each of us is apt to think his own ideas of what is true and right are nearest to the divine standard; but how easy it is, by following a regular course of religious duties, to lose the track and get into a wilderness state as to joyous, felt piety, the history of the Church in all ages fully shows.

My own experience in the ministry for half a century leads me to the conclusion that the best and most satisfactory piety—that which yields the richest comfort to its possessor—is found among those who are least known to the world. The most “joyful in the God of their salvation” that I have ever known are, like some flowers,

“Born to blush unseen  
And waste their fragrance on the desert air.”

The highest joys of divine communion are usually realized by the afflicted ones who pass through a deep and sorrowful course of discipline. “Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.” What words of sweet consolation are these to all sufferers! It seems

strange, as Mr. Payson says, but it is nevertheless true in all the world.

A HUMBLE LADY RICH IN FAITH.

A few years since, in the lower part of this city, in my pastoral visitations, far up an alley, in an old frame tenement, I found the wreck of what was once a very beautiful young lady. She had stood before me thirty-five years previous, and was married to the youth whom she loved ; but death had long since separated them, leaving her alone with several children who were now all grown up. She was the most pitiable object that I ever beheld. Her lower limbs were drawn up and distorted. Her arms and fingers were equally out of their natural shape and position. Perfectly helpless, not able even to feed herself or change her position in the bed, and had not been for ten years, she was waited upon by a faithful daughter. On entering her room, I inquired how long she had been such a sufferer. She replied : " The rheumatic suffering commenced twenty years since, but I have been about as I am now for only ten or twelve years."

" How much you must have suffered during those years ! Death certainly would be a relief, and I suppose you desire it very much."

" Oh no," she replied ; " I would not wish it otherwise. I would not turn my hand to change anything. Christ is everything to me, and he keeps me as happy as I can well be on this side of heaven. I have not

had one pain too many. All is right that Christ does, and I am perfectly content; and you know that is great gain."

I was instructed, humbled into the dust, by witnessing a resignation to which I was a stranger. I had believed it possible, and preached it as a privilege, but, like Mr. Wesley, had taught a possibility, a height of divine communion, which I had not reached. But now I saw it exemplified in a humble sufferer as never before. I was resting in Christ as a full Saviour, but had not reached that third heaven which she had gained by the ministry of suffering: Oh, the mystery and ministry of pain, loss and suffering!

No lady of wealth and ease have I ever seen so perfectly happy as was that woman in her penury and deep affliction. Not a murmur or complaint escaped her lips. All was gratitude and praise. After a few more weeks had passed, it was enough; Christ came and took her sweetly to himself. She was "made perfect through suffering." This is the sort of discipline we sometimes need to fully lead us to the open Fountain where we may wash and be clean.\*

\* And this purifying process is constantly going on as a steady wail of affliction heard throughout human society. Only last week I had occasion to visit a minister who had just passed through a very dangerous surgical operation. Almost his first remark as I entered the room was: "I have had many precious manifestations of divine love to my heart all along in life, but never did Christ so sweetly reveal himself to me in such fullness of joy as during the painful surgical operation. All other revelations of joyfulness and triumph of spirit were small compared to it." Like Moses, he stood on Pisgah,



“Made perfect through suffering!” The highest degrees of divine communion, it seems to me, are only vouchsafed to such as drink deeply of the cup of bodily or mental anguish. If you ask me why this is so, my best reply perhaps would be, I cannot tell. Charles Wesley has touched the point, perchance, as near as it can be done in his “Wrestling Jacob:”

“What though my shrinking flesh complain,  
And murmur to contend so long?  
I rise superior to my pain;  
When I am weak, then am I strong;  
And when my all of strength shall fail,  
I shall with the God-man prevail.”

Still, there is a mystery in suffering. Crucifixion is a hard death, yet St. Paul said he was crucified. We are all bound to believe, if an easier method would have answered the purpose, the loving Saviour would have used it in his case. So it may have been with the lady whose brief history I have given. The sufferings of Moses resulted in his being the meekest of men, with the loftiest of privileges, talking face to face with God. You pray to be made holy. It is a most desirable condition to be in; but the grace of perfect love comes not by wishing or the usual forms of prayer. Christ must reign, if at

looking over into the goodly land, his spirit already communing with departed loved ones, and ready for its glorious flight to join them in their immortal songs. But he had been wholly sanctified before, and was then living a “life of faith on the Son of God.”

all, in a heart emptied of worldliness, self-seeking and ambition. It comes by faith; but "how can ye believe while ye seek honor (titles, official positions of prominence) one of another, and seek not the honor which cometh from God only?" Afflictions take all desires for these trifles away. Nothing else so fully shows their vanity.

## CHAPTER X.

### *TESTIMONY OF EXPERIENCE.*

“And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.”

BISHOP LEONIDAS L. HAMLINE, D. D.,

in 1842 became deeply affected in view of his need of heart purity. It was no dream that then drew his attention to the want of the entire sanctification of his nature. Realities which crowded upon him in fearful array and burdened his soul in a manner indescribable impelled him to seek the Saviour's full image. It commenced in the closet. Its earliest stage was a clear discovery, aided by circumstances extremely reproofing, of his lukewarmness. He was brought to feel that, though born again, he had lost much of his confidence, and did not enter fully into communion with God. A sense of this want became very deep and oppressive. None but He who sees in secret can tell the number of ministers in all the churches who feel and groan under this sense of want—soul want. But pride of name and position prevents their seeking a fuller baptism of the Spirit. This would put a new song in their mouths, and make them flames of holy fire in their congregations,

but they fear the reproach of the cross. They have its honors and emoluments now, which they shrink from sacrificing.

"On the 22d of March, 1842, at the house of Mr. Downey, New Albany, Indiana, Mr. Hamline received the holy baptism so long and so earnestly sought. Now bowed before the Lord, he had strength given him from above to take hold on God with an unyielding grasp." A deep fervor to which he was before a stranger was now kindled in his bosom. Immortal joys filled and overflowed his soul. Like the sainted Payson, he dwelt in the land of Beulah, and discerned the glories of his future home. This state is known to some as the "assurance of hope," to others as "perfect love, holiness or entire sanctification"—"the very God of peace sanctify you wholly," or entirely—and others the gift of the Holy Ghost as a Comforter. This last is in precise accordance with the phraseology employed by the first Christian church in the Acts of the Apostles. Either conveys the sense intended, and indicates what God is willing and has promised to do for all believers. Dr. Hamline was led to hunger for this grace by contemplating the image of Christ, as the single object of ardent desire to be Christlike, to possess all the mind that was in Christ, seemed to him to comprehend all good.

And after he had gained that point the great deep of God's love seemed to swallow him up. He felt it not only outwardly, but inwardly. It seemed to

press upon his whole being, and to diffuse all through him a holy, sin-consuming flame. Yet like the sainted Fletcher, he, by refraining from bearing a full testimony, lost the evidence from his own soul. His own words were: "For some eighteen months I was like Samson shorn, because I did not fully confess God's goodness toward me. But at the session of the Ohio Annual Conference in Chillicothe, September, 1843, I made confession unto salvation."

From his conversion he had almost wholly separated himself from the world in all public demonstrations, celebrations of patriotism, etc., in which he had before delighted to participate as orator of the day; but now devotion was the element in which he lived. He sought retirement; Jesus was the life of his soul and the theme of his tongue. The cross filled his sermons, his exhortations and his conversation.

After he was elected to the episcopacy he wrote thus to his wife: "My soul is the subject of a most gracious work indeed. I feel stronger and stronger. Little things that used a year ago to disturb my peace now leave all the depth of my soul calm. The surface only feels the winds which blow upon it. I can say boldly that God is graciously finishing his work. Oh how blessed it is to wait and feel him carry it on! We are blessed indeed."

When his health failed, he retired from his service as a bishop and resigned his high office, refusing to retain it or any of its honors or emoluments, desiring

to carry out the true idea of our Church that the episcopacy is only an office, not an order in the Christian ministry. The old notion, "Once a bishop always a bishop," he did not admit, and desired by his example to oppose and destroy, as far as he personally or his own Church was concerned. And for it the Church will yet thank him in louder tones than it has as yet done. He has set an example to all ministers of a life of deep, joyous piety and burning love, as well as one of self-abnegation, counting all his gains of popular standing as dross for Christ and the future good of his Church.

#### WHAT THIS TEACHES.

That holiness, the gift of the Holy Ghost, destroys all undue selfishness. The apostles had this strongly developed while under the eye of the Master, for which he often reproved them. But when the Spirit came upon them at Pentecost, this remnant of fallen nature was swept away, and they ever after cared more for others than for themselves. This is the stone of stumbling and rock of offence with many ministers in all the Churches now. The world, with keen and practiced eye, readily perceives it in our struggles for place, influence, name and high position among our compeers. "How can ye believe which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?" Faith to such is quite impossible, though many of us fail to see it, and labor to induce faith, to fully believe

on the Son of God and realize a rich experience, when it is utterly impossible until the eye is singly fixed on God and self is lost sight of, being absorbed in trying to serve and please him, and him only. Here is the great offence of the cross in this day that hinders the work of God in most, if not all, the churches of our land. Self is too great; the way of holiness, though admired, is too narrow, "and few there be that find it." This answers the captious question, Why "only a few of either our ministers or people profess holiness." Critics might go much farther and say that many who started in the Spirit, like "the foolish Galatians not only ended in the flesh," but turned utterly away to the spirit of the world and its beggarly elements. Thousands backslide utterly because they do not forget "the things that are behind and press toward the mark of their high calling in Christ Jesus," "perfecting holiness in the fear of God." My way all through life has been lined on either side with the spiritually dying and the dead, who, failing to perceive the necessity of a higher Christian life, or, if they saw it, failing to seek it at once, have fallen into temptations and secret or open sin, and at last denied "the Lord that bought them."

The life of Christ must be seen in the Church, or it will fail to do its appropriate work in saving the world from its increasing vices. No system of police, courts, penalties and prisons has or ever can reform society. This has been tried long enough,

one would think, to convince all men of its truth. But the gospel and Christ have done it, and can do it, everywhere. But the average piety of the Church, as it now exists in all denominations, is too low and too feeble to affect the masses. Hence we preach holiness, a piety that first of all subdues self, that sets men on a loftier plane, filling their hearts with gladness and their lips with praise. When all believers come to realize this, the world will feel its power.

REV. WILBUR FISK, D. D.

While laboring in Charlestown, Mass., in 1819, he attended a camp-meeting at Wellfleet, on Cape Cod, in that State. This meeting was signalized by remarkable displays of divine power in the awakening of sinners and the sanctification of believers. Mr. Fisk had many exercises of mind on the subject of Christian perfection, but was not, when he went to the meeting, under any special concern about it. But while there his attention was strongly attracted to the subject, especially under a sermon by the Rev. Timothy Merritt on the baptism of the Holy Spirit. He became deeply sensible of his want of full conformity to the Christian standard; he sought earnestly unto God through the blood of the atoning sacrifice, and in the course of the meeting he obtained that "perfect love that casteth out fear." His religious emotions (what a minister must have if successful) now acquired a wonderful intensity and elevation. One who was present at the time says: "His lan-



guage and whole appearance had something in them more than human, most manifestly indicating that his soul then glowed with ardors of love nearly allied to those of angels. The next morning he preached on growth in grace, when the impression made upon the audience was deep, awful, glorious. His beautiful classic style, vivified with fire from heaven's own altar, never appeared to better advantage. He poured forth a full soul in 'thoughts that breathe and words that burn.' "

His views of the divine Being, especially of the power, glory and fullness of Christ, were almost overwhelming. He felt such a horror of sin, and had so great an apprehension of the purity of the divine law, that he "almost," to use his own strong language, "feared to set his foot on the ground lest he should do wrong." Previously to this he had often doubted not only his interest in Christ, but the truth of the Christian religion—afterward, never. From this time he was often heard to say that he never laid his head upon his pillow without feeling that if he never waked in this world all would be well. Prior to this he was often subject to desponding, gloomy seasons. "We heard him say long afterward that he knew no gloomy hours; his mind was always serene and happy."

Writing to his sister some time after, he says: "I have found, my dear sister, much consolation of late in that religion which I profess. God has been pleased to brighten my evidence of acceptance with

him. I have been enabled to say I have not a doubt; I feel it so. I have dedicated myself anew to the Lord and to his ministry. Though I love you, my sister, and my dear parents, if possible better than ever, yet I have felt such a complete devotedness to the work in which I am engaged that those ties which have hitherto given me pain are loosed. Most willingly do I devote all to God and rejoice in the service of such a Master. I look back upon my past life, upon my follies and my wanderings, and wonder at the mercy that has spared me and at that Providence that has protected me. Oh, that I could love this Saviour more and serve him better!"

#### THE LESSON HERE LEARNED.

All these deep experiences in holy love and joy, this apostolic fullness, were realized by him before he was thirty years old and prior to his marriage. It was this great change, this searching, cleansing power of the Holy Ghost, that brought him into prominence and made his after history so brilliant and commanding. It did the same for John Summerfield. Having heard them both preach several times to overflowing congregations, and witnessed their power to chain the attention and melt the hearts of the people, one can easily perceive the secret of their power was in the state of their own hearts at the time. They sweetly communed with God themselves, and all who heard them felt it.

In these days it is well known that many ministers

and high officials in the churches who aim to be attractive and popular are afraid to identify themselves with the question of holiness lest it may injure their influence. That which was the principal element of popular power with the fathers is by some now feared as a brake on the wheels, which retards rather than accelerates the onward motion. It was said, in the time of Christ's early ministry, "Who among the rulers have believed on him?" Nearly the same language is used now in relation to the true and only equipment for usefulness—"but few of the princes in our Israel profess holiness."

I have thus tried to show the true state of facts in the history of our Church touching the question of holiness, both as to belief and profession. It is a little painful to be compelled to defend the doctrine and experience of Methodism against the misrepresentation of one of its own officers. This was not my purpose, however, in the outset, but rather, in a brief form, to set before our people the real facts in the case, both as to doctrinal views and experience which I feared might become beclouded to the eyes of our younger members if it was not done by some one. Allow a brother and fellow-laborer in the "kingdom and patience of Christ," who stands by the river waiting for the call of the Master to cross over and join the victorious company on the other side, to say to all hungering and thirsting ones, as well as to the more experienced, Hold on to your

profession without wavering. Time and Providence will vindicate your course; leave the matter to God, the Judge of all.

Keep up the meetings for the promotion of holiness; relax not a particle of effort or zeal to spread the experience of perfect love, as Wesley did to the end of a long life. Preach, write, publish, the whole truth as it is in Jesus, but do not argue with any, as that will darken your own souls. Keep bright and sweet, kind and loving, and abundant in labors; let God do the rest. My heart has ached often for many of my young brethren in the ministry. They are sincere, ardently desire to see their churches prosper, holding long extra meetings and laboring hard, and, after all, are only partially successful. Why it is so they cannot tell. Had they received the baptism of fire, as did Dr. Fisk and Bishop Hamline, they could have succeeded better with one half the labor or anxiety. They do not see it, however, and perhaps will not.

## CHAPTER XI.

### *WHY MANY FAIL TO SEEK HOLINESS.*

“How can ye believe, which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?”

THE recent extensive labors of a few good men to promote holiness in the Church, as is well known, have met with opposition. This is by no means strange or unusual, as no work of reformation has ever escaped it. The excellent Mrs. Palmer of New York took the lead in holding meetings and publishing books and periodicals on the subject, and many others who caught her spirit have aided in the good work for a number of years. Then followed the national camp-meetings, which, having been held in many parts of our country, have awakened professors of all denominations of Christians to see the need of a more satisfactory experience as well as a more active piety. Why and wherefore comes opposition, or even indifference?

### EDUCATIONAL DIFFERENCES.

All men are influenced by education. It creates preferences, tastes and prejudices. Most differences on religious questions have their origin here. A

minister, educated in a college, in literary matters merely, and where little may be said or taught of religion, will naturally copy the ideas, modes of thought and the very expressions of his instructors. This is not unnatural, and indeed it would be strange if otherwise. The student is expected to attend the daily religious devotions of the institution, and what he there hears for consecutive years usually cleaves to and influences him through after life. His doctrinal belief, as well as the forms of expression used in speaking of divine things, will be influenced by the years he spent as an undergraduate.

Examples of this could be furnished to almost any extent. If, in the providence of God, such a one should become a minister in another denomination, holding different views from those held by his early instructors, it would not be strange if he should differ in doctrinal views from the majority of his brethren, or even the Church in which he was a minister. This is doubtless one cause of variety of opinions in our own Church, if not of opposition to the recent movement to promote holiness. It being a peculiar doctrine of Methodism, those not trained in Methodist schools, families or churches, in joining a conference, profess to agree with us in all points at the time, and do it honestly; but when circumstances bring our denominational peculiarities to the front, these brethren are found to differ in some important particulars. Cases of the kind have occurred in all our history. Dr. Stephen Olin, whose

education had not been in accordance with Wesleyan ideas on this point, openly confessed his dissent before the conference, but he was nevertheless received into the body. He, however, afterward received the "power from on high," and became one of its most able advocates.

WANT OF DEEP EXPERIENCE.

Here lies the principal difficulty. "If any man do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God." Nor can he know the truth on this vital and vitalizing experience in any other way. Appetite or its absence gives a very different appearance to food set before us on the table; "the full soul loatheth the honeycomb, but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet." It is in the higher life precisely as in the lower. The careless, unawakened worldling sees no beauty, nothing to attract him, in the pardon or purity which the gospel offers him. But the awakened one hungers for God more than for his daily bread. "The natural man understandeth not the things of the Spirit, they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Nevertheless, he deems himself a good judge of piety because intelligent in other matters. There are, no doubt, very many professors now in all the churches who were either never spiritually changed or have utterly lost the Spirit of Christ, and are in what Mr. Wesley calls a wilderness state: "If any man have not the Spirit of

Christ, he is none of his." The force of will, the demands of conscience, the fear of God and the habits of early life keep them in the Church; but there is no love, no joy in God, no special attraction toward the truly pious, nor delight in prayer and praise. To them all worship is mechanical and tasteless, even though it be performed regularly and according to the approved mode. As a consequence, they stand aloof from and dislike "the holiness party," as some choose to term them, or "have holiness on the brain," as others say.

Another class are devoted churchmen who keep up all religious duties, but call the more devoted "men of one idea," who preach, pray and speak much of perfect love. For various reasons they oppose the whole movement—say it creates distinctions between ministers who appear to be equally good and worthy men; it arrogates to itself more faith and love than other professors in the same communion, and to which it has no right or claim. The idea of salvation by a simple act of faith in a moment of time has always been hard to receive by many whom we love to honor in the Church for their excellencies as men, as well as for their standing as churchmen; though, with all our admiration of their character and usefulness, we dare not make a lie about them, and say they are in the best path and "living a life of faith on the Son of God." There is "a more excellent way" of holding steady communion with the Father and the Son—by the power and presence of



the Holy Ghost, as in the first Christian Church—and it is promised to all believers to the end of time. Many good men have not “received the Holy Ghost since they believed.” In self-justification some teach that it is not necessary, as growth in what believers now have is all that is needed or required.

FALLACIES HINDER SOME.

The strong argument used in defence by most men of this class is the parable of our Lord in the fourth chapter of Mark. It is not recorded by either of the other evangelists. “And he said: So is the kingdom of God as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep and rise night and day; and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear; after that the full corn in the ear.” Some men in our own Church—the Church of Wesley, Benson and Asbury, who taught that holiness was by simple faith in Christ—have recently used this parable of our Lord to prove that all holiness is by development, and not by faith. Our Lord in the parable certainly intended to teach no such thing. He evidently meant to encourage his disciples in their work—to sow the seed, and God would attend to the rest. It was saying to them: “Your duty is to preach the gospel. That done, be not anxious for the result, any more than farmers are after seeding the soil. You will see after a season, though this method of reformation is new,

and may seem inadequate, that your labor was not in vain ; and you shall gather a harvest of ripened grain. Fear not, therefore."

This parable, it seems, is now the strong point in the argument of those who deprecate the constant preaching of holiness as received by faith alone. But the fallacy is apparent. Vegetable life has no duties, commands nor responsibilities. God, through the soil, the sun and rain, does all for it. Men are agents under a moral government, capable of willing or nilling, of obeying or rebelling against all laws. Believers are required "to work out their salvation with fear and trembling," while "God works in them to will and to do." Plants are not depraved, as men are. Sin is compared to leprosy, not curable by either medicine or charm, but by God alone. Men are defiled in every part. Conversion, pardon and regeneration are but the commencement of the cure and cleansing ; holiness perfects the gracious work.

All Methodist ministers who use such illustrations to disprove the doctrine or the necessity of perfect love as a distinct grace conferred upon believers deny a leading doctrine of their own Church, plead for and excuse the present low state of piety in her members, and confess, unwittingly it may be, their own spiritual deficiency. Nay, more, by straining a parable of our Lord and compelling it to teach what it was never intended to convey, they deny the necessity of any sudden change by faith from nature to grace, and make all religion from first to last consist

in growth rather than in any sudden change by the power of the Spirit. They cannot deny any one of these sad consequences, for they naturally flow from such teaching. If holiness is by growth, so is pardon and regeneration; and then all vital religion, all fruits of the Spirit, are mere chimeras and exploded for ever; and so far as the influence of such teaching extends, spiritual life and joyous piety are utterly driven out of the world. Still worse for us as a distinct people, Methodism was never called for. It has misled the world by inducing men to think that a sudden spiritual change was both possible and necessary. Perhaps we have preached more of that doctrine than any other people. Religion, if the parable used by this class of teachers be correctly applied, consists in cultivation and education. God is not in it only so far as in sending the gospel as the seed. After that Nature must do all, precisely as it does for the plant. Are orthodox believers willing to receive this theory?

Are our people satisfied to have taught in their pulpits such fallacies as sound theology, or to have them published in their religious periodicals? I certainly hope not. Our youth should not be so educated. If they do receive and believe such theories, our glory has departed. At first we went up like a rocket, attracting the attention of all men; now we must come down like a stick, utterly powerless. I am standing on the verge of eternity, just waiting in my tent door, looking on the Church of

my love and most heartfelt affection, to see how the battle goes. The conflict is at its height. Wesley and Methodism cannot survive the loss of deep, joyous piety and burning love. A thousand heresies and false notions will be sure to follow such loss and rend us into fragments. Germany, the land of Luther, is a standing proof of this. Would that I could have the ear of all my dear brethren in the ministry! would that they could be induced to sink down into Christ as a full Saviour! That is the panacea that will cure all tendency to the use of such defensive fallacies, and make them men of one work as well as earnest men, full of the power now so much needed. Our hungering people need such men now more than ever before. Experience to a minister is as experience to a physician in everything. Theorists are of little account anywhere, especially in the pulpit and Church. Facts of deep experience soon blow all theories as do the winds the thistle flowers before them.

## READING.

Rev. Richard Reese, a delegate from the Wesleyan Conference to our General Conference in 1824, said, in my hearing, to the young preachers before him: "Read Wesley in connection with your Bibles. Wesley is the most reliable theologian we have ever found. Fletcher is smart and deeply pious, but Wesley is the most trustworthy as a teacher of biblical truth." Rev. J. Rushing, one of the fathers of the Philadelphia Conference, used to say to us young

men: "Read all the works of Mr. Wesley through every few years if you desire to retain your piety fresh and gushing. It will lead you along, up, up into the higher atmosphere of love, where there are but few clouds to obscure your vision of Christ." How true this is the writer well knows by his own experience for more than a half century.

Mr. Wesley was wise and far-seeing in requiring his young ministers to read certain designated volumes of his sermons every year. They, in his opinion, I suppose, comprehended all Christian divinity that was needed to enable a minister to fully lead his hearers into all truth. He well knew the tendency in all ministers to leave first principles and dwell upon that which, however true, is not interesting to the soul's immediate salvation. The mind, dwelling on other matters—studies directed rather to please the fancy than spiritually to profit the soul—soon loses sight of what once filled the whole range of its vision. By hearing a man preach a few times you can generally tell what books he most reads, as water usually tastes of the minerals through which it passes. Science, philosophy and history are all useful studies, and the man of God should be well armed with every weapon of truth; but if any studies alien to the special work of teaching men the way to life and immortality are allowed to so absorb a minister's thoughts as to shut out or not allow him time or taste for that which is specially religious and experimental, his usefulness will soon cease.

He may attract and please, may lead many into the Church, but few, if any, to Christ and salvation. He may, as many do, and have done through the ages, blaze for a time, but his piety will gradually die away, and he will go out in obscurity, and in more advanced life, when the tinsel of earthly things has lost its attraction, will wonder that he was so deceived and misled by the charms of popular applause and personal fame.

Experience fully justifies the wisdom of Wesley in requiring that certain more important matters should be read and reread to keep them fresh to recollection. As just remarked, the preaching, prayers and conversation of all men will run mostly in the line of their general reading. Those, therefore, who read but little on the cardinal doctrines of religion, such as the fallen state of our race, redemption by the sacrificial sufferings of Christ and the fruit of that redemption, pardon, regeneration and holiness, may be expected to oppose in some way every movement to promote a deeper and more satisfactory piety in the Church. This opposition, however, is shown mostly by insinuations, opposition to modes of doing, rather than by directly opposing the doctrine of holiness itself.

THE WAY OF HOLINESS IS TOO NARROW FOR SOME.

It requires self-sacrifice—nay, more, self-crucifixion—and for this reason, if no other, “few there be that find it.” “If any man will come after me, let

him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me." "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh (even in believers), and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Self-indulgence makes us like ill-trained children, "willful, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God," and holiness has therefore but little attraction for such. The most sad fact of all is that those most lost through habit are usually the least aware of it.

WEALTH IS ALSO A BAR.

"How hardly shall they that have riches," no matter how honestly obtained, enter into, or even approve of others entering, the way of holiness! The honor that cometh from men is tempting. What man of means in this age is able to resist its sweet, seducing charms? It is an age in which men of small ability, with a popular education and good connections, are easily promoted among their compeers. This is made a mark and becomes a seductive snare. Perfect love requires singleness of aim as well as a steady faith in divine guidance, a faith which connects God with every transaction of life, both small and great. "The pure in heart see Him who is invisible" all the time, and know often by sad experience that faith is darkened by the slightest looking for or seeking the honor that cometh from men.

## PROFESSORS OF HOLINESS ARE DECEIVED.

This is a very common objection. Such objectors usually fix a very high standard, and expect all professors of holiness to come up to it, without once consulting the word of God, and then condemn, as deceived, all who fail to measure up to it. Some may be deceived and really mistaken in their own spiritual attainments. It would be strange if it were not so. Mr. Wesley says: "What then? It is a harmless mistake, while he feels nothing but love in his heart. It is a mistake which generally argues great grace, a high degree of both holiness and happiness. This should be a matter of real joy to all that are simple of heart—not the mistake itself, but the height of grace which for a time occasions it. I rejoice that that soul is always happy in Christ, always full of prayer and thanksgiving; I rejoice that he feels no unholy tempers, but the pure love of God continually; and I will rejoice if sin is suspended till it is totally destroyed."

But it is doubtful whether so many make a mistake in "reckoning themselves dead indeed unto sin" as there are who believe they are justified, but are mistaken. Both are liable to similar deception; both may be mistaken. Why not object to religion altogether because a few are deceived? There are no counterfeit bank-notes where there are none that are genuine. Many may be mistaken in thinking they are converted when they are not, but it may not



injure them. If they are sincere, they will soon learn to judge of themselves correctly. God will lead them into clear light after a season. Apply this reasoning to the loftiest profession of divine communion, and we are content.

#### AMBITION BEWILDERS OTHERS.

This is a natural element of our fallen nature. It does good when it prompts us to deeds of noble daring and emulation for the moral benefit of our race ; but when it has no object but self and personal honor, it acts as a mote in the eye and dims the spiritual vision. Christ is our only true model, and "his glory was to do the will of the Father" and benefit our race. A bishop, a church officer, a well-educated minister of talents, may deeply hunger for sweeter communion with God ; his spiritual condition may be deemed safe, but he often feels that it is not satisfactory. The inquiry will come up in spite of himself, If I seek this fullness of perfect love, how will it affect my standing before men ? Will the popular churches so approve my course as to be anxious as before to secure my services ?

This sort of influence has induced many an unconverted but rising man in life to delay the work of repentance and reformation. The inquiry has come up, Who in popular life, "who among the rulers, have believed on Him" ? And yet the very minister who would urge him to disregard so unworthy a suggestion and seek now the salvation of his own

soul, when urged himself by the Holy Spirit to seek the "gift of power from on high" to more fully fit him for his sacred work, would shrink back by reason of similar fears. The fear of losing caste and position has hindered many from rising into a life of faith and perfect love. This accursed worldly ambition is the last thing that a popular layman or minister has to surrender in his full consecration. But it must be cast away. Christ cannot, will not, fully reign in a human heart unless he has it all to himself. "My son, give me thy heart" is his language to all of us. A heart full of love to God and humanity will raise any man or minister in the opinion of all men. The churches are now studiously peering over the list of ministers in search of just this class of men for pastors. The holy, devoted minister who forsakes all for Christ and his work "shall receive a hundred-fold in this life, and in the world to come everlasting life." This hindrance amounts only to a mere temptation of the devil. Nearness to Christ never injured any minister or member of his Church. An unsanctified minister is more or less a blind guide. He sees only part of the truth himself, and of course cannot teach what he does not know. How far will the woe pronounced by Christ on the religious teachers of his day apply to him?

## CHAPTER XII.

### *WHY WE PREACH HOLINESS.*

“Be ye holy, for I the Lord your God am holy.”

WE follow the best examples in the best ages of the Church. We believe that the most successful ministers of the past have been those who have preached the most definitely and earnestly on Christian experience—the deep, vital things of the Spirit. “Have you received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?” was a prominent question put to all believers in the purest and best age of the Church. Why was such a question asked then? Why should it not be propounded now? We declared before God and man, in the most solemn form, that we “believed in being made perfect in love in this life, and that we were groaning after it.” We deem it criminal in the highest degree to make such a declaration and afterward pay no attention to it until a few hours before death. Others may disregard the solemn pledge thus made, but we dare not, believing that “the Judge is at the door.”

We believe that our ministry will be known in eternity, that it will be a savor of life or of death to those who hear us, and that it cannot be the former

while we feel but little of the life of Christ in our own souls. Without having the unction of the Holy One ourselves, we cannot see how we can commend holiness forcibly to others. The feeling of a deeply pious heart cannot be imitated any more than another can imitate the feelings of a mother for her child. Our experience has fully convinced us that those to whom we preach never feel more than we do ourselves while uttering important and saving truths. If we are dry, so are they; if we weep over the miseries of fallen humanity, the people are sure to sympathize in our emotions; if our preaching does not touch upon the vitality and power of a felt experience, neither will their forms of speech in conversation or the social means of grace. The minister's manner, spirit and feeling, as well as his lack of feeling, are sure to be contagious and spread among the people. Is he earnest, so are they; is he joyful, so are they; is he deeply pious and living a life of faith, so do they. Are our opinions right, or are they erroneous? If we are right, do you marvel that we preach holiness so steadily?

2. We deem it the only way to keep up the life of the Church. Our experience and observation confirm the truth of what is said by Mr. Wesley: "As long as you are yourself earnestly aspiring after a full deliverance from all sin and a renewal in the whole image of God, God will prosper you in your labor, especially if you constantly and strongly exhort all believers to expect full salvation now by

simple faith ; and never be weary in well-doing : in due season you shall reap if you faint not."

To this truth we pay a full tribute. There is always more or less of deep feeling in the preaching, prayers and conversation of all who themselves hold steady communion with God by faith. This never fails to attract the multitude, for all men love to see a minister in deep earnest and to know that he feels what he says. If, on the contrary, the preaching and prayers be cold, formal and mechanical, there are usually but few hearers, and they are those who come more from a sense of duty than from a love of the service. Preaching holiness fills the churches and keeps up a constant revival spirit.

3. We preach perfect love or holiness also because the Bible is full of it, and our ecclesiastical system especially requires fervent piety. It is with us a deeply-seated conviction that Methodism cannot work smoothly in all its varied machinery without a deep, warm piety both in the pulpit and pews. The change of ministers every few years from one place to another, necessitated by our system, calls for self-sacrifices with us which exist not to the same extent among any other people. Let any one fancy our Church trying to keep all the parts of her excellent machinery working—the itineracy, love-feasts and class-meetings—without the love of Christ in its joyful influences on the hearts of both ministers and people, the hearty sympathy between the appointing power, the pastors and people. Think of all

being done as a matter of business, without feeling—the power on the one hand and resistance on the other, the bishops, the elders and pastors all working on the principle of selfishness, each looking to “his gain from his quarter.” How long would it take to break our system into fragments, or to make it one of tyranny and oppression? All this has occurred before and is still possible. Of course we hope and believe better things, and things that accompany better success; but fears are indulged to some extent for the future of our itinerant system unless we retain the deep piety of the fathers. Our confidence for the future of any ecclesiastical body is in its continued faith in God, warm love to each other and the souls of those to whom they are sent.

That the indication for a few years past has been in that direction very many of our people have greatly feared. The changes have been enormous. But God has checked the tendency in part, and given a new and more vigorous spiritual life to thousands of both ministers and lay members by this very preaching of holiness. This statement will be objected to, perhaps, by many in the Church; not, however, by such as Nathanael or Zechariah or Elisabeth of old, or the Wesleys, the Fletchers and Paysons of modern times, but by those who are without Christ, in a state of condemnation and spiritual death, but who unfortunately do not know it. With such all churches are well supplied, who are either really backslidden in heart or have never been truly regenerated.

Such usually hate to hear of the doctrine of perfect love from the pulpit or in meetings for testimony. I rarely preach on the subject but what I hear in a day or two from some of them. I speak with confidence; for having been a pastor for near half a century, and having led thousands of classes, I profess to know the spiritual condition of my own Church as well as any one in this nation. I pretend herein to no special sagacity; but having been a pastor most of my life, and mixing largely with ministers, as well as official and private members, I have had large opportunities of knowing the true spiritual state of the Church. Officials cannot see this as clearly as attentive pastors can, though endowed with more sagacity. It is practical labor in any department, and that only, which furnishes full information of its workings.

Ten years ago the "Methodist Recorder," published in London, in reporting the state of the Wesleyan connection, said: "The funds are all well sustained." All that was outward and depended on finances was all that could be desired. "But there was a shrinkage of numbers." The attendance at class was not what it should have been, for want of spiritual, devoted class-leaders to keep the members alive and together. They had plenty of men for trustees and financiers, but "lacked the right persons full of love and zeal to man their spiritual posts."

Will any man of experience and observation say that our Church in this country was not a few years

back rapidly approaching the same condition? What pastor has not found it difficult to man his spiritual posts with such men as felt a deep interest in the spiritual profit and salvation of those about them, who were all alive to God and glowing with love for their fellow-men? I need not say that none others are fit either for the pulpit or the class-room; none others can by possibility build up or "feed the flock of Christ, which he hath purchased with his own blood." They may educate others in doctrine, discipline, duties and forms of worship, but cannot spiritually profit many.

But wherever holiness is enjoyed, professed and preached fully, specifically and clearly, it has changed this state of things for the better. Fill a man with love to God and all men, so that he has power with God in prayer, and power with men in holy sympathies, let him enjoy and "live a life of faith on the Son of God," ever "seeing Him who is invisible," then the deserted class-room will have an attraction as never before, and life and spiritual health will glow upon the faces of all the members. We know this to be so; and since holiness has been clearly and explicitly preached and personally enjoyed by many pastors themselves, a great change has taken place in the laity.

And what except coming back to Christ's plan for his Church—*viz.*, "the gift of the Holy Ghost"—is the remedy for this coldness and loss of spiritual efficiency? Education, however useful in many re-



spects, cannot and never has reformed the Church or ministered spiritual life where there were sterility and death. Shall we let the Church which is our mother, and that we love better than life itself, drift away from the warm, gushing piety for which she has been so distinguished? Shall we allow her to imbibe and teach unsound doctrines on vital questions of experience, such as are now springing up and are cherished by some of her ministers? The most alarming symptoms of this are certainly appearing in many places throughout the Church. This no one will deny. All of us desire it otherwise. But the question is, Where and what is the remedy? Preaching holiness gave life to our whole system in its outset, and we know of no other way to preserve it from decay. Low piety, as all history shows, always terminates in false notions and heresy in doctrine, or, what is but little better, mere formal, mechanical worship, by which the masses lose all sense of vital religion, as they had in England when God raised up the Wesleys to bring the people back to the teaching of Christ and his apostles by spreading the doctrine and experience of holiness.

The doctrine of total depravity, or the lost condition of our race by the fall, is not sufficiently preached in this day.

It never is in any Church where the higher experience of perfect love is neglected or only partially dwelt upon. These two points of belief usually rise and fall together. An unrenewed man is rarely

impressed with the depravity of his own heart. He reads of it or may hear it preached, but he does not feel it until he is fully awakened by the Spirit of God. This is true also of all believers when in a low state of grace. The multitude drawn together by the excitement in the upper room on the day of Pentecost were professors of religion, and came up to Jerusalem to worship from their distant homes. Little did they think they were lost, unregenerate men at the time. But they soon felt it to be so when they rushed into such a scene as they there both heard and saw. Then they cried out in deep distress of soul, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Nor was Saul of Tarsus conscious of the state of his own heart when persecuting Christians. No power of argument could have convinced him that he was not in a safe spiritual state. But after Christ himself had appeared to him he was in the deepest distress of soul, which continued for several days, until true spiritual light came.

Men in a natural depraved state are not easily convinced of it. Do we expect them to see the need of a spiritual change without their first seeing their present danger as lost sinners? Why, then, not preach human depravity, and so portray the working of the natural heart as to convince men that they need a Saviour to deliver them?

The first book put into my hands when preparing for the ministry was Wesley on Original Sin; and when on my first circuit, on inquiring of a prominent

local preacher what books I ought to read, he replied, "Study first man's lost condition as a sinner; master that thoroughly. Then examine God's remedy for man's lost condition; this will show you Christ and his work, and the results of it. If all the Scriptures bearing on these subjects are studied fully and in your memory, you will be prepared to preach at short notice anywhere, at any time, without much special preparation."

"No bleeding bird or bleeding beast,  
Nor hyssop branch, nor sprinkling priest,  
Nor running brook, nor flood, nor sea,  
Can wash the dismal stain away."

This sad state of the moral nature of every man will soon be seen by preaching holiness fully and faithfully. That is the reason why Mr. Wesley found that "a blessing always attended such preaching." That men are totally depraved has in these days come to be doubted by some of our ministers. I heard a Methodist minister of popular ability say in the pulpit a few years since: "The doctrine of total depravity is not true; if it was, men would do all the evil they could." I doubted both parts of the utterance. If that be true, then Christ came to save those who were not wholly lost, which contradicts the Scriptures. And the song of the glorified will be: "Unto Him who hath washed us in part, and to the purity and excellence of unfallen nature in part, be the glory and praise of our salvation." The corol-

lary, though absurd, is legitimate, and accords with experience. On asking a dying man of wealth and position in society a few years ago on what he relied his hope of future salvation, he replied: "Partly on Christ and partly on my own virtues." No wonder that such preaching awakens no one. It may well be called an "emasculated theology." How much better to take the simple teaching of Scripture, that all the good in us flows from the atonement! All is lost by the fall, but we gain all by the divine remedy for sin. Preaching holiness will correct such wild theories; nothing else can.

The fathers of our Church, in their ministrations, dwelt much upon three points: the fallen condition of all men, redemption by the sacrifice of Christ and the fruits of that redemption, pardon of sin and the cleansing power of the Holy Ghost. This was the secret of their wonderful success. When we preach and live as they did the same great truths because we have felt their power on ourselves, our success will be quite equal to theirs, and not until then.

Christ contemplates the conversion of this sinful world by the preaching of his gospel. This is the principal means he has put in the hands of his Church to bring revolted men back to allegiance to himself, and very much depends upon the manner and spirit in which we handle and present it. If we do it aright, his aid and our success are assured without a question, "for the promises of God are not yea and nay, but are all yea, to the glory of God the

Father." We have seen that education alone cannot do this, for the best educated men are often the most hardened unbelievers, "even denying the Lord that bought them." Pulpit orators—for which there are now so many "itching ears"—without the Holy Ghost, never lead one soul to the Saviour. Whitfield was an orator, and wrought wonders during his short life; but his power was in the Holy Ghost and the steady assurance, the perfect certainty, that God was with him all the time. His entire life was "holiness to the Lord." In a letter to Charles Wesley from Philadelphia in 1764 he says: "Fain would I end my life in rambling after those who have rambled away from Jesus Christ." In another letter from America he says: "I am a roving hunter for souls in this vast wilderness, but oh it is glorious sport!"

That is the sort of spirit we desire again to see infused into every minister of Christ. It is the spirit possessed by the apostles of our Lord "after that the Holy Ghost had come upon them," and we believe that by preaching holiness, the "gift of power" will come upon both ministers and people, setting all at work as it did the first Church and the fathers of our own Church. We may be mistaken; to err is human; we willingly defer to the opinions of our brethren in most matters; but we must be excused for insisting on this one point—that without the felt presence of the divine Comforter no man is armed for the work demanded in the reformation of fallen men. He must feel it "a well of water spring-

ing up into everlasting life." This we deem the highest and most indispensable qualification for eminent usefulness.

We believe and know that pardon and regeneration is a great grace, and we believe the apostles of our Lord enjoyed this grace while Christ was yet with them. But the Master deemed them unfit for their reformatory work until they had received the Holy Ghost, and the history shows that this did fit them as they were not fitted before. Our own experience, as well as the history of the Church in all ages, leads us to believe, therefore, that preaching holiness, the gift of "power from on high," is at present the most pressing want of the times. If you deem us in error and our teachings to be misleading, we should rejoice to hear your reasons for so thinking. We trust that we are open to conviction, but refrain from calling us hard names; smite us, if you must, in kindness and love. If we wander from the teachings of Christ, the New Testament, or even from Mr. Wesley and the Fathers, we desire to be convinced of it in love. With our present convictions, experience and observation, we "can do no other, God help us!" Hard words from any, either in high or low places of influence in the Church, cannot stop us in our course; rational arguments uttered in kindness and love may do it. Our all to Christ we have given, and he blesses us with some fruit.

4. We preach holiness to make ministers good pastors, and to lead the people to help them.

When we live for God and the good of humanity, there is nothing in a minister's work too difficult for us to do. Hard things are made easy. Jacob's love for Rachel made his service seem a trifling burden. Pastoral work, when the heart is in it, is the life of a man of God, as it ministers health to both body and mind and enables him to preach more to the edification of his people. A poor emaciated young woman on whom I once called, when visiting in the country, said as I was leaving: "Oh, if I only had a pastor to come and sympathize with me, it would greatly comfort me in passing through the dark valley. He comes occasionally and prays in my room, but that is all." She died without such aid.

No moral, cold-hearted minister, though ever so wise and attractive in the pulpit, is fit for such a work as that. Nothing but a baptism of the Holy Ghost can make any man love such work or fill him with the divine sympathies so needed in it. We speak what we do know, and have felt in bitter experience. The baptism of the Holy Ghost is the only remedy of which we have any knowledge for lack of sympathy for those who are in bitterness. Can we furnish a better reason for preaching perfect love to God and genuine love for our neighbor? If you believe justification will do all this for all men, then preach it steadily, and we are content, but such has not been our experience.

The pastor is engaged in the most sublime work ever entrusted to man. He has the care of souls

“for whom Christ died.” His responsibilities are not to men only, but to God, “the Judge of all the earth.” He is bound to look after and labor for the good, not only of the members or attendants of his own church, but all who are near him, though thoughtless and wicked. It may be that many a poor sickly one, languishing and lonely, who can truly say “no man careth for my soul,” is in some alley near his church. No pious, praying person calls to see him in his humble home. No word of cheer ever falls upon his ear; all is sadness and gloom. And there he has to pine away and die almost alone, when there may be several ministers and many pious people living quite near him. Will God excuse this neglect?

What a fine opportunity for a man of God of the right spirit! How much good he could do, with a deep, joyful piety, full of Christian sympathy for the poor and suffering! What a healthful exercise it would be to both body and mind to find all such out, sing a cheerful verse or two, and pray with and for them! When we sink down deep into the Spirit of Christ, then, and then only, will such a work be pleasant and inviting. There are always a few in every church, in both city and country, on whom the Holy Spirit has laid a sense of responsibility for the sick and poor. These are greatly encouraged when their pastor sympathizes with them and aids their efforts. Deep, joyful piety is sure to lay this work on our hearts as well as on our hands. Noth-



ing else can induce a love for it. Love is sympathetic and tender, making us debtors to others, even the thankless and criminal. The great apostle preached "from house to house," and said: "God is my record how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ;" in the sympathies of Jesus.

There is a heroism in the religion of Christ, which is not yet fully brought out. But the Church is becoming more and more imbued with it in every Christian land. The day is dawning, the night is passing away; and when perfect love animates the hearts of all who now profess to be Christ's followers, we shall see heroic labors for the good of others.

The venerable Dr. Nott, the honored president of Union College, I think in 1858, said in a union prayer-meeting in this city: "When I look at the New Testament Church and compare it with the Church of the present day, I am compelled to say the latter is very unlike the former—so much so that they hardly resemble each other. One would scarcely know the modern to be a Christian Church after a faithful study of the apostolic pattern." He was a wise and good man, a great thinker, then standing on the verge of time, looking into the eternal world, whither he has since gone. Nor was he a croaker, but full of divine charity, cheerfully awaiting his "appointed time."

Thousands of others wise and thoughtful like him, and holding similar opinions, are now living in the Church. Current history is full of facts in proof that

the Church, with all her educational advantages, through the influence of wealth and fashion, is drifting away, imperceptibly to herself, from her former purity and vigorous piety. The might of the fathers was in being "crucified to the world, and the world unto them;" and however hard this self-crucifixion, this death to wealth and its attractions, of honor and preferment, a steady, living faith that fully unites to Christ is, in our opinion, impossible without it.

A warm, deep fervency of spirit is difficult to maintain without close self-scrutiny. Am I Christ's now? Does the sap of spiritual life flow from the Vine into me as a branch? Are prayer, preaching, conversation on the deep things of God, our chief delight and pleasure, or have we no taste for them? Men usually hold on to the forms of religion and a public profession long after the devotional spirit has passed away. Such at least has been the history of the Church ever since the ascension of our blessed Lord. But in all ages there have been a few who, observing this tendency, have steadily labored to keep their own piety warm and glowing, and to use means to stir up the gift of God in those about them.

5. We preach holiness as the most direct method of the world's reformation. Show us a better, more scriptural plan of labor, and we will adopt it at once. Will you blame us for doing the best we can with our present light? We are aware that the office and work of a Reformer, however sincere and con-

scientious, is always a thankless one. He is usually in the minority, and surrounded by the poor and non-influential even in his own communion. Reforms rarely commence at the top of society, but mostly at the bottom, among the lowly ; so it was in the time of our Lord and his apostles, so it was in the days of Wickliffe, Luther and the Wesleys, and so it will be most likely to the end of time. Leading, influential men in all churches are usually quite content to let matters remain as they are ; or perhaps it is timidity or fear of results. Changes are often considered dangerous to the stability of church affairs, the reason, perhaps, why they are not usually favored by church officials ; at least whatever may be the reason, history fully sustains the fact.

Wesleyan Methodism was started in an effort to reform the Church of England by preaching only the doctrines taught in her articles and homilies. Yet they were new to the very ministers and people who had recited and chanted them from childhood. The people were startled as by an earthquake which awakens men from a deep sleep. They could not abide either the doctrine or the manner of preaching it ; they would have none of it, and excluded the Wesleys from the very pulpits they had been educated and ordained to fill. How glad I am for that ! How thankful the world should be that it was done ! It enlarged their influence ; they became giants at once by being driven into the open air, God's own temple, to deliver their messages and offer their

prayers for the ignorant and lost. The fawning flattery and praise of the wealthy classes might have disturbed their purpose and dried up their piety. As it was, they fled to Christ as their only helper, and pursued their work with the greater ardor. Compelled by the winds of heaven, and without pulpits on which to spread their manuscripts, they learned to preach without written sermons and to pray without books. God compelled them to talk to men instead of read to them ; and Methodist ministers have mostly copied their example since—a principal reason for our unexampled success in this new country. We have a grand history, a wonderful organization ; may God pour upon it his Holy Spirit to keep it full of life !

6. Our aim is to quicken all believers, raise the tone of piety and fill the Church with the joy of faith. Then, and not until then, will the Church be a light to all men, “fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.” Holiness and sin, truth and error, good-will and hatred, vice and virtue, are opposites. They are in constant and deadly conflict. Like opposites in chemistry, they will so continue until the one overcomes and neutralizes the other. An acid or an alkali will be perfectly quiet when alone, but throw them together and there is a conflict, which only ceases when the weaker one is perfectly subdued. Then quietness is again restored.

Precisely so it is with vice and virtue, holiness

and unholiness. There is no neutral ground to be occupied while this conflict is going on. Christ himself has settled this question for all time: "They who are not for us are against us, and those who gather not with us scatter abroad." In this conflict we would not occupy a position which by any torture of the facts in the case can create even a suspicion that we are in a state of neutrality. We believe that God, angels and all good men are on the one side, and Satan, vicious habits, irreligion and all the vices of this vile world are on the other. We are in the habit of thinking that the gospel and the "power from on high" are God's remedies for all the woes of the world. The gospel preached earnestly, not moral essays written with logical exactness and coldly read to the multitude because they are willing to pay for it, but such a gospel as St. Paul preached with a warmth and fervor that caused Felix, the corrupt ruler, to tremble at the words of a prisoner in bonds, and compelled Agrippa to lose his self-possession as a king and confess before the bitter multitude his deep conviction of its truth and power.

This sort of preaching is quite impossible to all who fail to receive a little at least of the same power which rested on the great apostle to the Gentiles. That it does not rest upon many of us we know right well, and one half of those who hear us know it as well as we do. Education has never conferred this power; it did not even when the Master himself was

the teacher. After all he did for them, after all his instructions as to their work, he commanded them to wait for the gift of the Spirit, the promised Comforter. This, and nothing short of this same Spirit dwelling within, can give us power both with God and men.

This instantly made the first church a power which shook all Jerusalem. The city of David was filled with alarm for the safety of their cherished but effete system of worship. So it will be again, in our opinion, when all true believers are filled with the Holy Ghost, and not until then. A minister thus endowed enters his pulpit with an elastic step; he is never alone there, for Christ is always with him. His own experience enlightens every gospel theme on which he dwells. His soul yearns most for those whom the world holds most in contempt—the degraded and brutalized by evil company and habit. Christ came to seek and save the lost, and for these the deeply spiritual yearns the most. To reach this delightful state a man must consent to be singular, and, as matters are now, willingly bear the reproach of the cross, whatever it may be.

7. We are all Wesleyans. No one is entitled to be called by that name, so honored of God on both sides of the ocean, who does not follow his faith in this his leading doctrine. God evidently led him to see, enjoy and preach this great Bible doctrine. It is the central leading purpose of all the divine revelations to men to recover them from sin, from all sin,

and make them holy. For this has the chariot from heaven so many times visited earth. For this the ancient seers, poets and apostles were called, led, wrote, warned, preached, suffered and often died a violent death. For this the Son of God came to earth, lived, labored, suffered, died and rose again, and ascended into heaven, all to redeem and save men from all sin.

No wonder Mr. Wesley deemed it the most important doctrine of the Bible, and said that a blessing always attended its ministrations. He wrote thus to Adam Clarke, in November, 1790: "To retain the grace of God is much more than to gain it; hardly one in three does this. And this should be strongly and explicitly urged on all who have tasted of perfect love. If we can prove that any of our local preachers or leaders, either directly or indirectly, speak against it, let him be a local preacher or leader no longer. I doubt whether he should continue in the society, because he that could speak thus in our congregations cannot be an honest man."

That is our position precisely. Enemies to our system of belief on this vital doctrine of grace had better be outside the Church than inside. They will do less harm there.

In another letter to Mr. Clarke he thus speaks: "Every week, and almost every day, I am bespattered in the public papers. Many are in tears on the occasion, many terribly frightened, and crying out, 'Oh, what will the end be?' *What will it be?*

Why, glory to God in the highest, and peace and good-will among men. But meantime what is to be done? What will be the most effective means to stem this furious torrent? I have just visited the classes, and find still in the society upward of a thousand members, and among them many as deep Christians as any I have met with in Europe. But who is able to watch over these that they may not be moved from their steadfastness? I know none more proper than Adam Clarke and his wife."

That society was in Dublin. What wonderful success followed his preaching holiness! But these sheep needed a good faithful shepherd. Mr. Wesley was careful to look after that. And so should the appointing power be always. A cold pastor soon freezes up a warm piety in any place to which he is sent. Ought we to apologize for preaching holiness?

8. Religion, to reach and reform the masses in our land, must be more demonstrative than it has been for some years past. The holy praying women of the West, in their efforts to cure a national curse, have shown us what can be done by a truly demonstrative way of working. Messrs. Moody and Sankey, the one a Congregationalist and the other a Methodist, have exhibited to all men what can be done by extraordinary labors for God and all classes of people. England, Scotland and Ireland will not lose for many years, if ever, the impulse in the right direction which they have thus received from the



labors of these men. Both these movements have been by the lay element in the churches.

Of course God was with them and the Holy Comforter was within them, for no men or women could do the mighty works that they have done except God had been with and in them. All men concede this. It was a demonstrative way of doing God's work, out of the usual order altogether, and therefore the more startling. And the slumbering multitude in the Church and out of it must be startled or die in their sins. The brethren of the National Camp-meeting Association have made religion demonstrative also, and thereby done a service for all the churches of every name, as well as led many thousands from the ways of sin to a life of piety. If the good is done, we should all rejoice, whether the mode of doing it suits our taste or not. Whenever I hear any one object to the way in which a man is working for the reformation and salvation of his fellows, I want to ask him what good he is doing and how he is trying to do it. God requires every believer to do something for others. So Mr. Wesley did a hundred years ago, when he aroused a dozing nation. God's work is uniform in all the ages. First the workman, the instrument, must be right himself, holding personal communion with God. All labor fails without this, though ever so demonstrative; and this cannot be simulated successfully by the most adroit. The matter preached also must have an immediate bearing on the scriptural plan of

salvation. The laborer himself saved, his whole soul must be absorbed in a grand endeavor to expound, enforce and apply the truths which are above all other truths, and are "the power of God unto the salvation of men." All sensible men have marked the difference between preaching religion and preaching about it. A whole lifetime may be spent in the latter sort of preaching without awakening a single soul to a sense of his condition, while one sermon on the true need and way of mercy sometimes has led a whole assembly to cry out, inwardly if not outwardly, "God be merciful to us sinners!"

As to what is to be preached, Mr. Wesley says: "The points I chiefly insist on are four: First, that orthodoxy or right opinion, or harmlessness, or externally doing good, or using the means of grace, works of piety or charity, none of them, or all together, do constitute religion. It (religion) is none other than the mind of Christ, the image of God stamped upon the heart, attended with the peace of God and joy in the Holy Ghost. Secondly, that the only way to this religion is repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Thirdly, that by this faith he that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, is justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. And lastly, that, being justified by faith, we taste of heaven to which we are going." He says this in 1739, when his life-work had just commenced.

This sort of preaching in the churches, in school-

houses, in market-places, on the street and on commons, wherever standing-room can be obtained, by men "full of faith and the Holy Ghost," would soon change the state of morals in any community. Politicians would fail if they were not demonstrative, and so will the power of religion over the masses if no more is done than merely keep up the churches that are built, and continue to build more as our wealth increases, enabling us to bear the expense. Scotland abounded with churches long before the recent visit of the American evangelists, yet the common people were mostly in the dark as to what a vital spiritual religion was—precisely the condition in which the masses in England were when the Wesleys were providentially driven from the churches and compelled to quit reasoning on religious notions, and, like Philip did in Samaria, "preach Christ to the people" in the streets. Religion to be effective must be demonstrative, as the history of every great moral reformation fully proves.

We have been trying to change men in habit and taste by moral suasion, lectures and laws. We shall find in the end that God's methods are the only true and effectual ones. Christ did not send the apostles to lecture on temperance or intemperance, or any other abstract vice or virtue, but to "preach the gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." That has reformed society everywhere it has been tried. It will do it again in any part of the world, because it is the divine method. Human efforts to

reach and cure the vices of fallen men are more or less useful, and keep many men at work when they would otherwise be idle. But he who leans on them alone, with much hope, is sure to be disappointed in the end. Lecturers against the follies of Romanism, the errors of Universalism, the vice of intemperance, or any other vice or error, may think to accomplish much for society, and they may be very sincere, but I have long since ceased to expect much good to result from their labors. God's plan alone is to this hour without one failure, and will be to the end of all earthly things.

Men do not first prune the tree of all its branches and then strike at the root and cut it down. That would be great folly; but to try to reform men by pruning off each vicious temper, taste or habit would be still greater folly. Strike at the root, cut down the tree first; all is easy then. The disease is in the heart: "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: these are they that defile a man." The physician tries to find the seat of the disease, and is sure he cannot successfully check the fever until its cause is removed. Nor will reformers succeed in any other way.

Let every man be led to see himself ruined by sin; teach him that no outward form of morals or religion, no communion in the use of sacramental elements, no prayers or devotions, can change his moral condition.

“Jesus, my Lord, thy blood alone  
Hath power sufficient to atone;  
Thy blood can make me white as snow;  
No Jewish types could cleanse me so.”

Here is the panacea, the only remedy, for the vices and woes of human society. Tell every man this, in public, in private, in preaching, “with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven,” not in well-bred whispers only, but like a man full of “the power from on high,” as did the apostles of our Lord, and sure as is the promise of God there will follow marked reformations. The word cannot, will not, return void and unsuccessful. We cannot warrant any other means of reformation, for God has not commanded any other.

But this never will be done in the right way by any man or set of men until the divine Comforter, the Holy Ghost, fall upon them. The apostles of our Lord could not have made a mark in society without this fullness. Cowardice, fear of men and fear of themselves, their support, their personal safety,—all these would have loomed up before their affrighted vision and driven them to their fishing-nets. But the divine baptism on the day of Pentecost made them fearless reformers of the demonstrative kind.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### *RECENT REVIVAL OF HOLINESS.*

“And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?”

HOLINESS, as a work wrought in us subsequently to justification, has been one of our principal doctrines during and since the time of the Wesleys. It is not improbable that we never should have been a separate people, or had an existence as a Church, but for this one point in Christian doctrine and experience. It has been preached by our ministers, and experienced by them as well as by our people in all the years of our history. Special services and publications to promote holiness within the last forty years started with Mrs. Phebe Palmer, who bore her testimony almost alone for many years, and it was no doubt her influence and labors that started what has since followed. Within the last seven or eight years, however, it has become especially prominent by means of the national camp-meetings. The first of the series, held at Vineland, New Jersey, was an experiment, appointed by a few brethren “whose hearts the Lord had touched,” in connection with the pre-

siding elder of the district, to revive and promote the experience of Christian holiness in the Church. It was a success beyond their expectation. Other similar meetings for the same purpose have been held in many sections of the country since, being confined by no conference or State boundaries. This extensive scope gave the meetings the name of national. It was a humble movement at first, was started in much prayer and deep religious feeling, almost without any organization, but with the specific aim of leading believers generally to a higher purpose, as well as a loftier experience in divine things.

The doctrine preached was purely biblical, and specifically Wesleyan and Methodist. Having been deeply interested, and having watched the movement carefully from the first, I am quite sure that the preaching, exhortations and prayers, as well as their very songs, have all been in accordance with sound orthodox theology and Christian experience. Men on fire with hallowed and deep feeling themselves since the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost always have delivered impassioned discourses and prayers. They cannot do otherwise. It is of God that it is so. If a man of God curbs his impulses to please phlegmatic hearers, he soon finds himself forsaken. One summer would have ended these camp-meetings and sent the brethren home in defeat had this been done. But the work took wide range and gave enlargement to their souls, already

on fire with love for the whole race of men, and, as is always the case, increased their zeal for God. Of course objections were made to the manner of their preaching rather than what they preached. This, being expected, was met with all kindness and love. It was none other than the precise form of opposition (the violence excepted) which met the Wesleys from ministers and members of their own Church.

THE WORK WAS EVIDENTLY PROVIDENTIAL.

Our own and all other Churches needed such a movement or something analogous to it. The war had just closed. The morals of thousands had been injured beyond recovery, except by some attractive religious movement that evidently had God in it. Money was abundant and cheap. The means of wealth, and the changes which wealth induces in the modes of living, were within the reach of many who had been poor and pious before. All men of experience know how wealth affects its possessors, especially such as have not been accustomed to the opportunities of evil which it furnishes. The history of England after Scotland had been subdued and the war had ceased is a case in point. The churches were either closed or deserted. Theatres were ever open and filled. London was said to be one vast playhouse. But God, the wise Reformer, is not at a loss for remedies. As the fiery flying serpents came upon the people of Israel in the time of



fullness of bread, so fell the black plague upon that metropolis, and swept away, it is said, nearly one-fourth of its population in a short time. Then the theatres closed, and the churches were opened and crowded almost day and night; and it could have been said of almost every one, "Behold, he prayeth!"

The history of the world is full of similar experiences and examples. Why God did not correct our vicious tendencies in a similar way is not for us to say. But the revival of the churches by pouring out his Holy Spirit in an unusual manner was certainly, as it seems to us, a more merciful measure of reform.

This is always done by first quickening a few, and using these to act upon and influence the many. By this movement Christ has quickened thousands, and raised them up from a low, unsatisfactory piety to a higher life of holy communion with himself. The agents employed in such cases usually suffer reproach for the time, as did Luther, Whitfield and the Wesleys. History, however, will do justice to all men. The way of holiness may be too narrow for many. It always has been. Men usually say, Let well enough alone. We all believe in holiness, and some of us preach it. We might ask, Where are the results unless experience compels? Both the Wesleys believed in holiness, and preached it for ten years, but with how little success until they realized experimentally what they taught! Then

they saw results at every service. And so it has ever been. How few of us would reach manhood's prime but for the tender affection God has given mothers!

Let us look at a few marks of divine influence resting on the work from its commencement:

1. It has continued from the beginning until now without perceptible abatement. Had the movement been of men, it would have long since passed away. Indeed, the people are now more earnest to hear and read on the subject of holiness and the higher life than at any previous period. "The common people heard the Saviour gladly" when the ruling classes were bitter against him. Nothing in the present century has so arrested the attention of the churches and believers generally as has this movement to promote perfect love among professors in all denominations.

2. The quickening and spiritual life it has imparted to all the churches. Camp-meetings were almost a thing of the past. We were becoming fashionable, living in more elegance than formerly, and encamping in the woods was deemed vulgar with many of our people. But the marked success of these meetings in the forest in raising the tone of piety has given camp-meetings a new start. They are now more numerous and powerful than ever before. And what is still better, holiness is the theme of one-half of the discourses delivered on the grounds, no difference what may be the private views of those who

control the services. That was especially the case in 1873, at Ocean Grove. It was not a national camp-meeting, but the drift of all the sermons, experience-meetings, prayers and holy songs was very decidedly in that direction.

This is the case also with the classes, prayer-meetings and love-feasts now held in most of our churches, both in city and country. Strike out the songs and melodies now used in most of our social meetings everywhere, originating as they did in this wave of holy love that has swept over the nation within the last seven years, and there would be little left. The Church is a planetary distance above where she was before, in zeal and pious energy. Many more souls have been led to Christ from the ways of sin than formerly. Preaching holiness, by fixing a true standard of scriptural piety, as it always does, has awakened a deeper concern even among the ungodly and profane. Even the witness of the Spirit to our pardon and adoption, preached in almost every sermon forty years ago, had been of late rarely heard by our people from the pulpit or in the class-room.

My brethren both in the ministry and among the laity will certainly bear witness to the truth of this. There was a sad degeneracy in this respect, and in some degree it is so yet among those who fail to see the hand of God in the recent movement. There is no use of quibbling or trying to deny or conceal the proofs. Moral essays even now are often heard by

our people instead of that gospel which is the power of God unto salvation. The very men who deny the need of any further cleansing than pardon and justification bring are, so far as my observation has gone, the least in the habit of preaching on the witness of the Spirit as a necessity to pardoned believers. This is well known in the Church. They frequently dwell on the gift of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, which has no reference whatever to the personal pardon and justification of the one hundred and twenty on whom it fell. It was given for no such purpose, as they were regenerated long prior to that wonderful day. But as this point is discussed elsewhere, I will simply say such opinions do not exist except among a few whose ideas can never make much impression upon the Church because of their manifest absurdity.

3. All the funds of the Church have been greatly augmented. The missionary collections, with what the Church most needs, the missionary spirit, have been much enlarged. Perfect love that makes a man feel that every other man is his brother is just what every believer needs, and this divine work of holiness all through the Church has produced this result; and its effects will be more and more apparent as the work progresses. Oh how it enlarges one's soul to feel that Christ is with him, and commands the service of all his abilities in doing good to others!

One of its officers has said that the Church extension collections have been very much enlarged and aided by the recent wave of mercy. And the

Church periodicals have also received large additions to their lists of subscribers; while a score of independent presses have sent smaller sheets, books and periodicals among thousands who cared but little for religious reading before. Piety and love need food, and will have it in defiance of all opposition. "The Guide to Holiness," published by the now immortalized Mrs. Palmer, for many years fed the joyous love of thousands long before the national camp-meetings were thought of. Indeed, the entire movement originated, under God, in the piety and labors of that extraordinary woman. The "Home Journal" also has been a power in the Church for many years. And more recently weeklies and monthlies have sprung up all over the land to supply reading suited to the changed tastes and thirsting souls of the people. In this the work resembles that of the Wesleys one hundred years ago. John Wesley in prose and Charles in poetry kept the common people of England constantly reading of "the wonderful work of the Lord;" so it is now all over this land. The good done already by this means is incalculable, and the work has but just commenced. God speed it with still greater power "until the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them," and let all the people say, Amen!

4. Consecrated laborers have been wonderfully multiplied. The women who started the prayer-meetings in the saloons which recently created such a stir in the West, *nine-tenths of them*, received the

power from on high either at or by means of the national camp-meetings. The italicised words I have from a man who lives near the scenes of their labors and knows all the facts of the case. The movement was of God, who had by this mighty wave of holy love prepared the agents he afterward used in calling the nation's attention to its most threatening evil. Whatever may be said of that remarkable movement, however viewed from the cold standpoint of indifference or the heated feeling of self-interest, it has aroused public sentiment against the liquor traffic on a wider scale than any other modern movement; and although some quietness may have ensued since, the end is not yet.

Rev. Dr. Merrick, late president of Ohio Wesleyan University, writes from Delaware, Ohio, under date of March 4, 1874: "We are in the midst of the most wonderful movement I have ever witnessed. Those not mingling in it can form but little conception of what it is. It is called a temperance movement, but its chief characteristic is its profoundly religious spirit. Such penitence, such humility, such humble trust in God, such a sense of the divine presence, I have rarely, if ever, witnessed even in the most powerful revivals of religion. Christians are drawn together far more closely than they were in the meetings of the Evangelical Alliance. Surely they unite their hearts in prayer and praise, as God strangely manifests his presence in their assemblies. All feel that God is in this work. I dare say but lit-

tle ; in such a presence our words should be few. Ride on, thou conquering King !”

All that as the result of the recent preaching of holy love and power as the privilege of all God's people ! Preachers of pardon and justification only as the highest grace needed or possible to Christians should learn a lesson here of the gift of the Holy Ghost as an absolute necessity to such as desire to labor for God.

5. The whole Church has felt the impulse unusually. The prayer-meetings, classes and love-feasts all bear witness of it. Men and women who were silent before now with full heart and open mouth proclaim the riches of that grace which has introduced them into the clear light in which they daily live and walk. Even those churches where the pastors fail to sympathize in the holy fervor abound with members all alive to God, and are holding social meetings weekly to promote the hallowed feeling and save as many souls as they can ; and God is with them. Thousands of professors are now working for Christ who were worse than silent and idle before this power came upon them.

R. PEARSALL SMITH AND WIFE,

two persons of remarkable adaptation to Christian labor. With both gifts and grace they had been always ready to do what good they could before, but at the national camp-meetings they received the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Subse-

quently, they have both been burning and shining lights, leading others into the clearer light. They have been laboring in England since last autumn, and have been remarkably owned of God, and the work still goes on without abatement. Being specially invited, they visited Paris, and Mr. Smith thus addressed many of the pastors, with other persons of distinction :

“The great movement is going on over the world. A fresh breath of life is passing over Christians, and from the most distant parts of the world tidings come showing that there was a breathing after holiness and a deeper acquaintance with Christ. It was no denominational movement, but men of all denominations were waking up to realize in their joyous experience many truths which had been hitherto held too much in theory—an assurance of faith in a living Saviour. The desirability and *practicability* of living a life of cloudless, uninterrupted communion with God—the desire awakened that God would thoroughly search the heart and reveal all impediments to this communion. Numbers were now testifying that religion was a perpetual joy, and many who had lived a groaning life are seeking to be filled with the Holy Ghost. Many in England had experienced this great increase of spiritual life, but where is the need so great as in Paris? The visible results of Mr. Moody’s work in Scotland are seen in thousands turning to the Lord, which makes it almost a work of sight.”



As a result of this meeting, eight pastors, representing the principal churches in Paris, signed a circular inviting the Christians of Paris to a series of afternoon meetings at the Wesleyan chapel, and to services in various churches, to hear Mr. R. P. Smith on the subject of entire consecration to God and of the power with which he will endue our souls for his service. The writer continues :

“ After breakfast we had a meeting for prayer for dear France, and afterward Mr. and Mrs. Pearsall Smith addressed the assembled company in the drawing-room on ‘ the rest of faith ’ and the life of consecration. Mrs. Smith’s remarkably lucid, original and striking addresses went home to many hearts, and will long be remembered as diffusing a sweet savor of Christ.”

They have issued a monthly periodical in London, called the “ Pathway of Power,” which, with the meetings to promote holy living and a life of faith, is awakening a wide and deep interest among all classes. Trace all these facts to their source. Look at what has been done and the work now being done by thousands of Christian laborers in England, started, under God, by their influence, and the most doubting ones must confess that the movement is not of men nor by men.

Then the labor of Messrs. Moody and Sankey within the last year, whether originating in the camp-meeting movement or not, makes no difference ; it proves that God is choosing his own agents, and is doing

an extraordinary work in his own way, with or without the consent of Church organizations, as they may choose to approve it or not. England and Scotland have been stirred within the last twelve months as never before since the days of Whitfield and the Wesleys, nor even then. That the whole work has met with opposition from a few good men is only what was expected. It has always been so since the time when Christ and his apostles aroused the dozing professors in Judea and Jerusalem by preaching a holiness to which they had not been accustomed. Opposition advertises and always serves any good work. Let all who determine to live a life of faith in defiance of all difficulties keep low at the Master's feet in ceaseless prayer to God, "in nothing terrified by their adversaries, as it is an evident token of salvation, and that of God." "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake, having the same conflict which ye saw in me and now hear to be in me."

## TO THE READER.

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A FEW years since I published in the "Home Journal" my views on what is termed "the unpardonable sin." Having long entertained doubts as to the correctness of the commonly held opinion, I ventured to suggest a different one. The demand soon exhausted the issues containing them, and I had thought of requesting their reissue in the same form. I have inserted them here in a more permanent form, and together, so they may be read without interruption. Nor is the theme alien to the general character of the book. Of course my views will be controverted—old theories are hard to yield—but I have long since learned to think for myself and allow others the same privilege; honest, deep convictions are always careless of criticism.



## CHAPTER XIV.

### *THE SO-CALLED UNPARDONABLE SIN.*

FEW Scriptures have awakened a deeper solicitude than the one in Matt. xii. 21, 32: "Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come."

This saying of our blessed Lord has caused deep and painful anxiety to many pious and devout minds. All men have sinned, some have blasphemed; and the question is, with such: Have I committed this deadly, mortal sin for which there is no forgiveness here or hereafter? This text has been recalled to my memory scores of times during my ministry by those who have feared their non-success in penitent prayer; and their unsatisfactory religious state started a doubt whether they had not been guilty of the sin here alluded to. In my youth there was a volume floating about, called "Russel's Seven Sermons," on this very text, teaching the irremissibility of certain

sins and the danger of men committing them and thus rendering their salvation impossible. Thank God that book and most others teaching the same theology are out of print and not likely to be republished! They have done mischief as well as good. And for some reason the doctrine is not so troublesome now to such as are given to low spirits.

The common opinion of the text now is that certain leading Jews of our Lord's day committed an unpardonable sin in saying, as in the twenty-fourth verse, "This fellow doth not cast out devils but by Beelzebub, the prince of devils," when they knew better, but were led to it by malice and hatred of Christ, thus sinning against light and knowledge, and with malice toward the Saviour. Dr. Adam Clarke takes this ground, but confines the possibility of such a sin to them alone, and deems it quite impossible for any one to commit the crime since, as none can be placed in their circumstances. Richard Watson, in his Notes on the Gospels, adopts the same opinion, but says it is an exception: "and we have no right to enlarge on an exception from the mercies of the gospel beyond its strict letter. If any exception to a general rule demands a severely rigid interpretation, it is this, which stands in direct opposition to the general character of the covenant of grace."

Some of his words he capitalizes, feeling evidently that he was treading on delicate ground, and was fearful lest his views might lead some one to despair

of divine mercy. Bengel and Dr. Nast, and Olshausen as quoted by Nast, say: "Such are not pardoned—not because God is unwilling to pardon and forgive, but because the offender has lost the capacity to believe God can forgive." Dr. Whedon, who is now passing his excellent notes through the press, falls into the same common view, and puts the case of the unfortunate Pharisees of our Lord's day in the same despairing light. In fact, all the writers that I have consulted follow the same old long-trodden track.

However hazardous it may be, I take issue with them all on the intent and meaning of this solemn saying of our blessed Lord. I cannot help attempting it. It will be observed, in reading all these authors, that they feel what they say may do damage to certain minds apt to be gloomy and doubtful, and all, or nearly so, confine the possibility of this sin to the parties to whom our Lord then spoke. Mr. Watson is specially guarded, and says: "It is in direct opposition to the general character of the covenant of grace."

This common view so generally held of the intention of our Lord in the text to me has not been satisfactory for many years past. To differ from public sentiment is often dangerous, for in Church matters and theological notions perhaps it is well that most men follow the lead of certain distinguished writers—not for the sake of novelty, or because of any willingness to controvert the opinions of the

best writers of our own Church, but because, first, the common view referred to before, makes the text a solitary exception to the general character of the covenant of grace, as Mr. Watson has well said; and secondly, it has discouraged many humble penitents and timid minds in their approach to the mercy-seat. I will recite a few of my reasons for not being satisfied with the common view held by the Church.

1. Why is this sin of the Pharisees so marked by divine judgment and followed by such a fearful penalty? It is quite true that law without penalty is useless. But denying power in Christ and ascribing it to Satan, though a sad crime truly, yet stands on the same ground with many scores of sins which we know have been forgiven. Malice may greatly enhance the guilt of offence; it often does. It may have increased its enormity here. It may have existed in a special way with these bigoted Jews. But it seems to me it is not a whit more manifest or strongly marked than in many other cases during the ministry of our Lord. Examine the offence a little. "And when the Pharisees heard it (heard what?) heard the multitude say, Is not this the Son of David." These rulers feared the populace were about to leave them and follow the lead of Christ. That was their sin from the first and all through, and the reason of their crucifying the Saviour. I see no malice in their trying to hold on to their followers. In retaining in their interests the



populace, it was the custom of the times to ascribe to an evil spirit what they failed to account for on natural principles. It was an age of Satanic possessions. If the people had said nothing, the rulers would not have used the phrase thought to constitute an unpardonable offence. And what they did think or say was not said to Christ, but to the common people. Their ecclesiastical system was a State as well as a Church, and it was an electioneering remark. And we all know how much importance to attach to such remarks in times of political excitement.

Why this sin of the Pharisees was so much more heinous than that of scores of others in similar circumstances has not been shown, so far as I have seen, by any commentator. When Moses wrought a succession of miracles in Egypt by the finger of God, the leading men were doubtless fully convinced that the work was beyond the power of man. Heathens are not fools ; but the stable institutions on which the monarchy rested were at stake. This must not be believed to be of God, and therefore the magicians are called in to keep the masses quiet and secure their continued obedience to authority. The trick succeeded for a time, and God was rejected. The same thing was tried in Israel during the reign of Ahab, on the heights of Carmel, but Elijah convinced the staring multitude by calling for fire from heaven, and the long-deceived masses arose and slew their deceivers. The sons of the prophets ridiculed the

ascension of Elijah on similar ground, and so did the false prophets treat the true prophet of God, Micah. Christ cast out the evil spirits from the man among the tombs, yet the people, mostly Jews, rejected him, and deemed him a dangerous man.

Pilate and Herod were equally guilty. The former washed his hands of the guilt and declared him innocent. Yet he, contrary to his better judgment, gave him up to his tormentors, who cried, "Crucify him!" Those who stoned Stephen were worse than these Pharisees. Stephen says to them, "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye." Their sin, and that of their fathers, was resistance to the Holy Ghost; and there certainly was more malice in it, for they stopped their ears, thus refusing to hear more, and ran upon him and took his life. This was the madness of malice, and contrary to their own convictions at the time. I cannot, therefore, see in what respects the sin of the Pharisees was greater than that of those who went before or followed after them.

2. This sin was not so much against the Holy Ghost as against Christ. Why should this sin be said to be against the Holy Ghost any more than their other sins? The miracle was performed by Christ himself. In the parallel passage (Luke xi. 20) the language is, "But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you." His miracles were all performed in his own

name, using the personal pronoun in the first person singular. In another case he says, "Go ye and tell that fox, Behold I cast out devils, and do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected," assuming that he did the work himself and in his own name. In the former it is "with the finger of God." In neither case is the Holy Ghost referred to. He is the actor in both, so that the sin in each case was against himself. But allow me to add a few more to the same effect. "What will ye that I shall do unto you?" Matt. xx. 32. "Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things." Matt. xxi. 27. "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me." John iv. 34. "The works I do bear witness of me." John v. 36. In the name of Jesus, Peter healed the lame man. This is the form of speech used in all cases. The blasphemy therefore was against Christ, and not the Holy Ghost. Of the Holy Ghost they had then but little knowledge. Years afterward the new converts at Ephesus had not so much as heard that there was any Holy Ghost.

3. The gospel was afterward preached to these same Pharisees. The apostles were commanded to begin their ministry at Jerusalem. There is where these same leading officers of the Jewish Church lived; and the gospel was to be preached to every creature, there as everywhere else. These were the persons, then, as well as others, to whom pardon was first offered. There can be no rational doubt of

this. Indeed, the presumption is that some of these same men were converted and saved during the wonderful revival which occurred on and after the day of Pentecost. But few of the names of the converts are recorded during the whole transaction, and therefore there is no positive proof that can be adduced. "But many of the priests were obedient to the faith."

4. This common view, that these men committed an irremissible sin, I oppose again, because it wars with other Scriptures. The rule of interpretation has always been that an obscure passage is to be explained by other Scriptures more clear. If the usual interpretation be the true one, that these men were ever after excluded from mercy, the apostles would have been compelled to except them in their offers of mercy and grace to the multitude. Thus: If any are here who ascribed the miracles of Christ to Satanic power, you are excepted in our offer. Our gospel is not for you. And they could have retorted, But you are to "preach the gospel to every creature." And, what is more, your general commission was subsequent to our grievous offence. The sin because of which you exclude us from the mercy of God and the merits of Christ was prior to your commission, and well known to the Master when he commanded you to go and preach a full salvation to all men. Therefore you dare not exclude us from its benefits. Who could object to their logic? How could they have answered them?

No; the apostles excluded none: they had no right to do it. Our Lord did not mean what the commentators say he meant. His words of warning were based upon their thoughts, not their words. "And Jesus knew their thoughts." It may be doubted if they uttered in words what is ascribed to them; at least loud enough for him to hear. Else why is it said, "He knew their thoughts"?

The apostle says in Hebrews, "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man." This grand passage was written, most likely, while some of these same men were living. At least its doctrine was preached in their hearing. There can be no doubt Christ suffered death and was crowned subsequent to their crime said to be so unpardonable. "He tasted death for every man." The wicked Pharisees cannot be excluded from mercy and the clear gospel sense of this passage be retained. So, at least, it seems to me. "But now he commandeth all men everywhere to repent." Of course repentance must be possible to all, else it would not be commanded.

The common interpretation of this passage excluding these offending Jews from divine mercy and all the benefits of the sacrificial systems of grace, it is admitted, stands alone in the New Testament. Mr. Watson admits this, and seems to feel the force of the fact, and urges that we have no right to extend

it farther than this solitary case. A single passage in the whole Bible, and that not clear on the point in controversy, as has been already shown, is made to contradict the clear sense and plain teaching of all others. This one fact should at least create a doubt of the correctness of such interpretation, however common, and however high the authority that sustains it. It certainly should lead us to look for a sense more in accord with the general tenor of the word of God and the gracious system of mercy we are called on to preach to all men.

If such a sin could be committed at any time—one that could never be forgiven—is it not reasonable to suppose that the author of Revelation would have marked it, and cautioned men against its commission more than he has? A rock or shoal in the broad ocean is not left without a light, boat, buoy or bell to warn the mariner to keep at a safe distance. Nations deem such guards a necessity to save from wreck and loss of property and life. The author of Revelation has given repeated warnings against every vice in the whole catalogue of vices, and this, too, even when such sins are declared remissible. How much more necessary to warn men against a sin that never can be forgiven! The caution certainly is more needed. It should have been iterated and reiterated in the most urgent and solemn form known to human language. Yet such a mortal sin is not named anywhere else in the teachings of our Lord, nor indeed in the New Testament, unless the language of St. Paul in

the tenth of Hebrews be so interpreted; but that text can have no such construction; and until it be attempted, there is no use of further reference to it here. Not a warning is given in relation to any unpardonable sin. On the contrary, we are told that "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." "Let the wicked forsake his ways and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon." For the reasons above stated I cannot receive the common interpretation given of the text in question. I believe that our Lord never intended to teach that the salvation of these Pharisees was impossible. The text admits of a very different interpretation.

What, then, was the intention of our Lord? This the reader has a right to ask, and I shall try to reply as best I can. When the views of others are challenged by any one, he is bound to at least suggest others. Every mystery has a key to unlock it, if we are able to find it; and it does seem to me that this text admits of a different and more merciful interpretation.

The whole Trinity is engaged in the work of human redemption. The prior dispensation, with its types, figures, promises and bleeding sacrifices, prefigured what was to follow after. The gospel in Leviticus was a system of education preparatory to the gospel of Christ. The one could not do without

the other. The first was *unconditional*—that is, the wisdom or folly of men could not check or materially change it. Divine wisdom planned it, and almighty power carried it forward till it had accomplished its purpose in its mighty sweep through the ages.

The Son of God, the Man Christ Jesus, came at the time appointed. He assumed his work, and finished it in the redemption of a fallen race. This, too, was *unconditional*. Man had no part in it. "He came to his own, and his own received him not." But this in nowise retarded him in fulfilling his mission. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." "It became Him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through suffering."

The Holy Ghost, the third person in the adorable Trinity, also had his work. This is a personally saving work. He was to reprove the world of sin, work upon all hearts, and draw men to Christ and salvation; and as men are moral agents, capable of receiving or rejecting the divine offers of grace and salvation, the work of the Holy Spirit is of necessity *conditional*. Men can resist, grieve, quench and effectually neutralize all his work wrought within them, and be finally lost. This resistance and man's utter ruin are in his own power.

Resistance and impenitence being possible to the end of life, forgiveness and salvation may be rendered impossible; for when once the Master of the house



hath risen up and shut the door, that is the end of mercy and hope. To blaspheme is to resist, to oppose, to defame and to hold in contempt either the Father, Son or Holy Ghost. The work of the Father and the Son they had resisted in all the forms within their power. But neither of these was conditional, and therefore opposition and human crime could not hinder them.

"Now," says Jesus, "you oppose and vilify me and my work to the last; but all such blasphemy may and shall be forgiven unto men. But the Holy Ghost is soon to take my place. I am soon to finish my work and go to the Father; but when the Holy Ghost comes, if you persist in resistance to him as you have to me, there is no forgiveness for you 'either in this world, or that which is to come.' That will be your last offer of mercy. His kind offers and offices rejected, and there is no hope left. Mind, it is blasphemeth! Not you did or do now, but continued to the end as you have treated me and my labors for your good. It is not one act, but a continued course of action."

This, it seems to me, was the intention of our Lord. He uttered it as a prolepsis or warning as to their future course, as if he had said: "You resist me in my work; but the dispensation of the Holy Ghost will open in a few months: I warn you not to so treat him. His work you can resist successfully, as it will be conditional; but such resistance will be your final ruin." In this light Christ did not pro-

nounce sentence of preterition, but uttered a solemn warning to those whom he knew would see and feel the power and Godhead of this same Holy Ghost on and after the day of Pentecost.

1. It seems to me that this view of the passage clears it of all difficulty. It harmonizes with all the circumstances and all other Scriptures. Christ had come and fulfilled all the promises and types. They were convinced that his claims were sustained by his works. "If I had not done the work that no other man did, they had not had sin; but now they had no cloak for their sin." Still, he would pay the price of their redemption. The Holy Ghost would soon come and "reprove the world of sin because they believed not on him."

2. This view accords with all the facts, with observation and experience. Large promises of pardon and acceptances are made to the most criminal. The most vile have found mercy. In modern revivals, some are found cursing the work, and blaspheming God and religion by attributing the work to the devil; yet these are afterward in many cases saved and found "sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in their right mind."

3. But it is objected that this sin hath never forgiveness. The expression is strong, I know, and must be interpreted in the light of other Scriptures. "No drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God," yet such are often converted. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery,

fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, sedition, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revilings; and such like, of the which I tell you before, as I have told you in time past, that they that do such things, *shall not* enter the kingdom of God." Gal. v. 19-24.

Here is also a strong passage. All are shut out of the kingdom without an *if* or qualifying phrase, yet all know how it is to be understood. "The wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the nations that forget God," yet "let the wicked forsake his way," etc. So he who now blasphemeth may repent, believe and be saved; so runs the tenor of our glorious gospel. A wonderful system, it is true, but worthy of acceptance by all.

4. It may be asked, Is it possible, then, for the day of grace, with any one, to terminate before death? No proof, as far as I can see, exists that this can occur. Life is a probation. All this life is our day of trial. I know of no passage where it is even intimated that man's day of probation has ended or can end before death. What purpose could He in whose hand our breath is have in extending our life beyond our day of probation where there is no possibility of change for the better? I can see none. He would be in the way of others, with no possible benefit to himself. The whole gospel system recognizes all the living as capable of repentance and reformation. The offer of salvation is and must be

to all men. Woe to the Church and all of us if we do not so offer it. Were the opposite true, how could we preach to the masses and be sure we are speaking the truth? and there can be no strength without assurance. It is more or less painful to see how the pious and able commentators on this passage labor to avoid doing injury to the timid and doubting believer, italicizing and capitalizing certain words lest they be misunderstood. It indicates a weak confidence in their own utterances as to the meaning of the text under consideration. In the offer of grace to all men Christ intended his messengers should be free of all doubt, and therefore strong. A minister's strength is in his confidence, his assurance that he is right. A doubt of his own position enfeebles all he says. Every man of God who labors for the salvation of others feels the force of this truth.

Let us look at those Scriptures seeming to favor the old opinion that men live on after repentance and salvation is impossible. "My spirit shall not always strive with man, seeing he is but dust." This is spoken of the old world, soon to be swept off by the flood. God intended their destruction, but gave one hundred and twenty years' respite. Noah preached, and every stroke of the hammer in building the ark was a telling sermon. The flood took them all away. Probation and life ended at the same time.

But may not a man's iniquities be full? There

can be no doubt of this; and until they were full among the Amorites, Abraham or his seed were not allowed to destroy them. Probation and life ended together in their case also. All were cut off, both small and great. Death follows quickly when hope of moral change ceases. This may or may not account for much that transpires about us constantly. Here I will cease to follow out this painful thought. "Secret things belong to the Lord our God, and revealed things to us and our children for ever."

5. But is there not a sin unto death? Undoubtedly there is a sin involving natural death. "There is a sin unto death: I do not say you shall pray for it." 1 John v. 16. There can be no doubt that many are cut off in early and later life by reason of their vices in the present as well as in former ages. The people of the old world fell victims to sudden destruction because of their wickedness. Sodom and other cities of the plain were suddenly consumed, the apostle says, "suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." Korah and his followers, the rebels in Israel, were engulfed in a moment with all their families and treasures. The sin of Achan involved natural death. The house of Eli was blotted out, and Ananias and his wife paid the penalty of their offence suddenly, by the direct agency of almighty God himself. It is a fearful thing to fall under the divine wrath.

But, thanks be to God! the way of hope and mercy is open to all men as it was to the wicked Pharisees. There is no outcast race, family or person. All hold

a like relation to God, and the gospel opens the way of salvation, so that none need despair or even doubt of divine mercy. We may happily sing with Dr. Watts, with full faith in its truthfulness :

“And while the lamp holds out to burn  
The vilest sinner may return.”

THE END.







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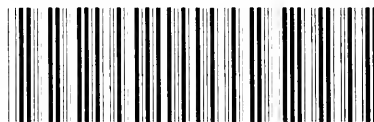
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